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# **THE BAR-SINISTER.**

**VOL. I.**



THE  
**B A R - S I N I S T E R,**

OR  
**MEMOIRS OF AN ILLEGITIMATE.**

*Founded on Facts.*

*Q*

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*Tout marche, et le hasard corrige le hasard.*  
VICTOR HUGO, *Hernani*.

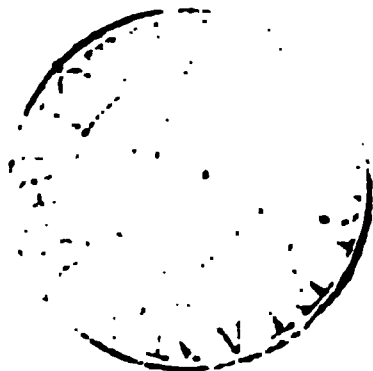
Thy name? — Who art thou?  
Didier!  
Didier? — Didier of what?  
Didier of . . . nothing!!  
VICTOR HUGO, *Marion de Lorme*, (free trans.)

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

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1836.

363.

LONDON:  
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TO  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE  
RIGHT HON. EARL MULGRAVE,  
LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND,  
ETC. ETC. ETC.

MY LORD,

ALTHOUGH the following pages are too trifling to occupy the attention of your Excellency, whose valuable abilities are now directed to the well-being of a long suffering country, yet encouraged by the kindness with which you accepted this humble tribute of respect, I boldly venture forward, relying rather on your considerate indulgence, than on my own efforts.

Thus, as a picture derives brilliancy from being placed in a judicious and

favourable light, so I trust that your patronage will reflect a lustre on my work, displaying to advantage the merits it may possess, and obtaining from the public that approbation your condescension must imply.

With grateful acknowledgments for the honour your Excellency has so graciously conferred,

Allow me to remain,

My Lord,

Your obedient and respectful

C. E. L.

CRES CLARE, COUNTY GALWAY,  
14th January, 1836.

# THE BAR-SINISTER.

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## CHAPTER I.

Oh ! toi, qui n'a jamais dû naître,  
Gage trop cher d'un fol amour,  
Puisses tu ne jamais reconnoître  
L'erreur qui te donna le jour.

Que ton enfance goute en secret  
Le bonheur que pour elle est fait ;  
Et que l'envie toute la vie  
Ignore, ou taise ton secret.

MEMORY is a strange faculty — commencing in doubt—terminating in certitude—over which the mind, however powerful, can exert but little control ; we know not whence it arises : its radiant phantasies dance in wild succession before us ; we know not whence they came, or when the rainbow joys of remembrance are to be ob-

scured by years, or perhaps totally eclipsed on this side of the grave; imperceptible are the connecting links which lead by a mysterious chain from the unconsciousness of infancy to the maturity of mental excellence,—from the sublimities of comprehensive thought, to the helpless imbecility of age. As we look back on the days of our childhood, some events picture themselves forth in gigantic proportions, whilst others of equal, perhaps greater importance, are lost in the obscurity of surrounding ignorance, until an unexpected ray of intellectual light breaks through the clouds of forgetfulness, and displays them with dazzling fidelity to the eye of recollection, and we wonder with astonishment at the capricious despotism with which this heavenly prerogative asserts its latent power. Thus, when endeavouring to recall the fleeting images of that which is past, we find difficulty in selecting the earliest from amongst the number of confused impressions which alternately crowd upon the aching brain, or evade the search of our most anxious scrutiny.



Of many things, I retain a tolerably accurate idea, especially of my own feelings, under the pressure of various circumstances ; but of external objects, my perception proved less keen, and has probably continued thus through life. Some people can describe what they have not precisely witnessed or experienced, whereas I have often endured that which I never could depict.

The first thing I can remember is living in France, but I well knew that I was not French, and had little connection with the country beyond residing there.

My father occupied a large chateau in Normandy, (or rather in the department of Seine Inferieure,) situated between the ancient city of Caen and the picturesque sea-port of Honfleur, where he continued established, as *he* said, for the advantages of shooting and fishing ;—*entre nous*, he probably found it an eligible residence for more reasons than I can possibly assign ; but having exceeded his means in England, and his father, the Earl of Glenmore, being

averse to paying farther debts, or reaping a second crop of the young gentleman's wild oats, the fact of his remaining abroad may be accounted for without any considerable effort of conjectural ingenuity.

The Right Honourable George Desmond, commonly called Viscount Esdale, had been a fashionable man, and what is now termed in polite language, a *Roué*; but he was an elegant *Roué*; he was not the sporting frequenter of the Fives Courts, or the lounging inmate of a Club-house; his vices were all tinged with the gentlemanly colouring of high breeding; he was strictly correct in discharging his gambling debts, at the risk of his personal liberty when importunate tradesmen presumed to threaten arrest; accepted a challenge without hesitation, and considered himself a man of honour; in short, he was the type of a certain species which are gradually becoming extinct. At the time of which I am now writing, Lord Esdale was a most agreeable *rifacimento* of half the English noblemen scattered on the Continent, or

running the gauntlet of dissipation at home; he was still in the prime of life, approaching the age of thirty-five, remarkably handsome, with an aristocratic cast of countenance, possessing considerable natural abilities sufficiently cultivated to render his conversation pleasing, and to impart refinement to manners that were generally admired for the off-handed ease which characterized them in familiar intercourse.

I was then an urchin in petticoats, of whom his lordship was extremely fond, and *judiciously* encouraged in every kind of mischief, which he thought denoted spirit; and as I clambered on his knee with infantine playfulness, he taught me to quaff claret and despise water-drinkers and milksops. At six years old I was, what sensible people would call, irretrievably spoilt, as he never punished any faults excepting two, viz. cowardice and falsehood: to do myself justice I was not addicted to either. It was at this memorable period that I assumed the more masculine appurtenances of “unmentionables,”

and on presenting myself with childish pride in my new and most desired garments, Viscount Esdale caught me in his arms, and swore he would make a man of me.

By degrees Chateau Belle Isle became a fashionable resort. The retirement which at first seemed expedient was now become irksome to my father, and he gradually opened his house to a succession of friends. Our society, habits, and hours partook of a mixed character, or perhaps I should convey a more adequate notion by saying, no character at all. It resembled a Bachelor's Hall in England, where all the sober regulations of time and fitness are neglected. Freedom was the motto. We had constant relays of visitors, squires, half-pay officers, French Counts, English younger brothers, Irish adventurers, with an occasional sprinkling of broken-down peers of the united kingdom, who came to "refresh at Esdale's." We seldom saw a female, if I except *one*, who must claim an especial notice: that lady was my mother!!!

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It appears as if I ought to change the pen and ink when endeavouring to pourtray that sweet and chastened being. She bore a striking contrast to the coarse elements surrounding her. How she existed in such a rude atmosphere, how she ever could have sought its contamination, was a problem. She was young then, and beautiful; her humiliations, which were frequent, must have redeemed her former errors, if she had been guilty of any. There was a gentle winning softness of manner that eminently distinguished her, and twined around the hearts of all; yet she was sad and sorrowful, shrinking from the casual contact of my father's boisterous inmates with a sort of instinctive horror. She used to gaze on me until the tears fell fast from her drooping eyelids, and prayed too — often and alone, unless when I crept cautiously into her private apartment, and nestling in her bosom, repeated in lisping simplicity the fervent aspirations of my kneeling parent, who closed my little palms within her own as she taught me a few short orisons suited to my tender

years, the recollection of which has long since been swept away by the whelming torrent of events. Her prayers were more of a penitential character than the overflowings of thankfulness: she spoke in supplication rather than in confidence. . . . . My father joined not even in the outward forms of worship; he affected contempt for the superstitious observances of every church, and seemed glad to remain in a foreign country, where his conduct and peculiar tenets were alike free from the investigating commentaries of well-meaning neighbours, and which protected him from the necessity of church-going, the impertinence of churchwardens, the rapaciousness of tithe-exacting parsons, the interference of overseers, the pecuniary annoyance of rate-paying, and the whole burden and pressure of civil, religious, and political obligation.

To return to my mother, whose softening influence with Lord Esdale, was infinitely better felt than perceived, she was, indeed, the universal medium of charity and good offices, a ministering angel of comfort to the household;

of indulgence and forbearance to all. When the noisy festivities in the parlour were prolonged until late at night, when the climax of revelry was at its highest pitch, when the merry jest went round the joyous circle, and the boisterous laugh by which it was accompanied re-echoed through the building, when all below was uproar and gladness, my mother used to come with stealthy pace to watch my slumbers, smooth my pillow, and still my wayward cries with soothing nursery lullabies, that even now haunt me with their mournful cadence in the dead of night, when the winds of heaven are let loose. Still I think I see the tall elegant figure robed in white, as she bent fondly over the crib in which I reposed, her dark hair simply parted on her brow, and her refulgent eyes beaming maternal love through the silken lashes that almost swept her cheek.

Her taste was refined ; she was fond of flowers — of poetry — of romance ; her attachment to Lord Esdale proved it. He was a sort of idol enshrined within the sanctuary of her heart,

to which she offered an inward and never-failing devotion, to whom she had made the greatest sacrifice a woman ever consummated. Hers was the un murmuring immolation of self;— she loved him, as one does love, when there is nought else in the wide world to cherish or bind us. Whatever her family or connections might be, they were unknown to us, and she remained totally unnoticed by them; and the familiarity, even the acquaintance of strangers was equally avoided with the sensitive delicacy of her nature. But the all-absorbing passion inspired by Lord Esdale, was neither shared in proportion, or did it meet the reward its constancy deserved. He was addicted to the world — its pleasures — its intoxications; he was impatient of the slightest restraint her presence imposed upon his indulgences. He grew tired of the seclusion of a country life, and he was growing weary of the gentle companion who had hitherto enlivened his voluntary retreat; the habit of variety may be suspended for an interval, but it is not easily subjugated. The mild ra-



diance of her star was on the wane: first came indifference, coldness,—then neglect, symptoms of irritation and unprovoked anger. This continued some considerable time, and was borne with unrepining meekness, until the unequivocal appearance of a rival, who had formerly exercised the meretricious profession of an opera-dancer, hastened my mother's precipitate departure. I have a faint reminiscence of receiving frequent and tearful kisses bestowed from the fond lips of my weeping parent; a plain locket containing dark hair, forming what were then to me most mysterious initials, was fastened round my little neck with her trembling hands, that met in a close embrace, protracted with agonizing emotion . . . It was followed by a cruel separation, proclaimed to my infant ears by the hollow rumbling sound of rapidly receding wheels.

I cried myself to sleep that night, and rose next morning with pale cheeks and swollen features. Lord Esdale looked grave and dissatisfied, but soon commenced a system of rough consolation, that took effect spontaneously, con-

sisting of the free donation of a poney to ride, which had long been the object of my secret aspirations; a favourite dog was allowed to follow us; and the society of a groom was super-added, by way of improving my morals, manners and general demeanour.

As time wore on, I gradually forgot the sorrow-stricken Hagar, who had left her Ismael in this intellectual wilderness; but although her image faded from my thoughts, it was consecrated in the deep well of latent affection, and I never could abide the presence of the saltatory fair one, who had succeeded in the favour of Lord Esdale, in spite of sundry tokens of good-will, presents of sweet-meats, finery, toys, and a vast deal of ill-judged indulgence, for which I proved contumaciously ungrateful.

Events occurred about this period, inducing my father to return to England, where he obtained a reluctant permission from the Earl of Glenmore, to inhabit the family mansion, which had fallen into neglect and concomitant decay. Our whole establishment was removed and soon

domiciliated at Desmond Hall, a fine old manorial place, built according to the Elizabethan style of architecture, with gables, and somewhat low ceilings, oak wainscottings, dark pannels, and wide stairs. A profusion of luxuriant timber surrounded the house, and screened its ancient walls from the northern and westerly storms, whilst an extensive lawn unfolded itself in front, sloping towards the southern aspect, giving the *ensemble* an air of sunny cheerfulness. A range of offices and gardens filled up the rear, and completed the domestic economy of a residence calculated to ensure the comfort of its inmates. The park, consisting of several hundred acres, was beautifully diversified with wood and water. When I observe that this hereditary domain was situated in the most romantic part of Devonshire, reaching the boundaries of Cornwall, no farther description of its local advantages or picturesque beauties need be added.

Here we continued the same style of existence as at Chateau Belle Isle: the family circle, however, increased; to my inexpressible disgust,

there was a baby, which in most houses becomes an object of interest, and concentrates around its little self the sympathies and good offices of all its seniors; but such was not the case in this instance: the intruder, far from welcome, was consigned to the obscurity of an upper apartment, from whence it seldom emerged. After a suitable interval, came another unwished-for guest: how I hated them!—how my young heart swelled with bitterness!—how the rancour of jealousy and envy distilled itself drop by drop, till my boyish heart teemed with gall! for in their solitary nursery, at least, they shared a mother's love, and basked in the sunshine of companionship. *I was alone!!!* My father's quick eye saw the elements of discord springing within me, and finding the case might become of difficult management, sent me forthwith to an excellent preparatory school at a considerable distance, where a limited number of young gentlemen were carefully initiated in the various branches of classics, *belles lettres*, and mathematics.

I went through the routine of study as most children do, learning and retaining at least some portion of the many things taught. I grew tall, healthy, and active, acquiring considerable proficiency in various school-boy craft, and even aspired to the excellences of the more manly pastime of cricket.

On entering my teens, an occurrence took place, which has materially influenced the events of my subsequent life and stamped indelibility on feelings, which otherwise might have taken a far different direction. Naturally proud, I was inclined to become overbearing, and my home education was not of a nature to raise or purify my sentiments from the dross of earthly vanity clinging to them. At best I was a wayward child, full of morbid phantasies, and strange sentiments; little had been ever taught me, and the small knowledge I had gained, was the result of early impressions, received unwillingly, which had neither been conveyed with prudence, nor rectified with judgment. I had hitherto remained in perfect ignorance of my real posi-

tion in life, and of the peculiar circumstances attending my birth. I loved my father from impulse; his partiality towards me elicited a return. I was proud of being his son, and conceived as a matter of course, that those titles and estates which appeared to impress the multitude with respect, and obtained such unequivocal demonstrations of servility from many whose opinion I was taught to value, would in their natural succession devolve upon myself. A doubt on the subject had never entered my mind, and from that reason I was the less prepared to encounter a suggestion of the sort. Fully convinced of my own *honourable* importance, the arrival of a new boy at the seminary was not of sufficient consequence to attract much attention on my part, had not the sneering *hauteur* of his manner proved pre-eminently repugnant to my own self-love. It was easy to discover that Augustus Percival (for that was his name) must be the favourite of fortune, and a spoilt child to boot. He soon rendered himself generally unpopular, but with me the

feeling extended beyond mere dislike; I took an unconquerable aversion from the first moment I beheld him, whilst he certainly appeared in a great degree to provoke and deserve the sentiment he inspired: we evidently shunned each other's society as if by instinct.

I cannot place much belief in the theory of antipathies, more particularly when no rational cause can be alleged as a foundation for such premeditated enmity. Yet I am tempted to think that this unaccountable sensation originates in our individual *amour propre*, which is ever ready to take umbrage at some real or imaginary superiority assumed by the object of our repugnance. We rebel against the pretensions of others; we are indignant at the presumption of which they seem guilty, and hate the apparent advantages that we do not ourselves possess. Be this as it may, pique never fails to produce irritation, and our boyish dislike, no longer dissembled, became mutual; a sort of petty feud sprang up between us. Augustus was extremely overbearing and tyranni-

cal in temper, idle, and fond of low pursuits ; delighted in being the head of his company ; patronized a sycophant set of his own, of which he became the leader, and defied all opposing interests. My uncontrolled disposition could ill brook the annoying assumption exercised by the new comer at the expense of those whose situation in the world happened to be less promising than his own, and I made an inward determination to embrace the very first opportunity of humbling him.

A short time previous to the vacation, we prepared for a public examination. On this occasion Percival roused himself from the usual indulgence of dissipated indolence, and suddenly betook himself to that steady course of reading so long neglected, depending upon the natural quickness of his apprehension to supply all former deficiency, and hoping to snatch the premium for which others in the school had long been striving, thereby seeking to establish a character for diligent application with his superiors. Equally ambitious of meriting the desir-



able reward, I had studied very hard for a considerable length of time, and my unremitting exertions obtained the prize, which is more commonly awarded to persevering industry than to the evanescent flashes of capricious talent. My unsuccessful opponent, exasperated by defeat, did not seek to conceal the bitterness of his chagrin, or the rage of envy and disappointment, which exhaled itself in sneers, gibes, taunting expressions, and contemptuous language, to which my yet uncurbed spirit refused to submit.

“This honourable distinction,” cried I, unable to restrain the effervescence of my ill-judged indignation, “is more valuable, from the circumstances attending its attainment: I have won that which Mr. Percival has lost; I have gained it through my own endeavours; it is the dearest jewel of my crown, and I prize it far beyond the heraldic glories of ancestral dignity. I shall forward this token of approbation to my father, Lord Esdale.”

It was an evil hour in which I invoked the

viscount's name ! What demon could have urged me, I know not ; the result was fatal alike to hope, pride, parentage, and legitimacy ; had I trod on a serpent, its tooth would have been less keen than the unexpected, stunning retort of Augustus Percival.

“Esdale *your* father !” quoth he : “ forsooth, it is at best a very questionable matter, as your mother eloped from her husband, Sir John Neville, to live with him, and he, getting tired of her, keeps an opera dancer in her place. I am the son of Lady Katherine Percival, daughter to the present Earl of Glenmore, heir-at-law to the property, and heir presumptive to the earldom. So, sir, *you* had better drop your aristocratic pretensions, and with them the name of Desmond, assumed so ostentatiously, to which you have not the slightest claim.”

I listened until my blood curdled in my veins, and a sickening sense of giddiness came over me, as I bounded forward with an irresistible impulse, and struck the speaker to the earth, with a single blow of my clenched fist : “ Bravo, bravo !”

was shouted and echoed by the surrounding throng of school associates, who, eager to witness a pitched battle, formed a ring instantaneously. My antagonist rose, crimson with shame and anger; he retaliated manfully, being both older and stouter; I was desperate with passionate emotion, and fought like a tiger, limb to limb, grappling fiercely with my writhing foe, until we both fell in the struggle, and were at length separated.

A crowd of anxious friends rushed forward to felicitate me for the spirit I had shown on the occasion; but I turned from their coarse congratulations with disgust, and fainted in the arms of a fine fellow who had just entered the scene of action: he humanely conveyed me to my bed, where I was confined for several days with a raging fever, that nearly terminated my existence. During this illness, my sufferings were intense, from being greatly bruised, heated, and excited; my blood inflamed with rapidity. The image of my mother, until then almost forgotten, flitted before me, — all her

gentleness, her beauty, and her sorrows seized upon my recollection,—a thousand circumstances, formerly unheeded, were recalled, and tended to corroborate the fact asserted by Percival. The remembrance of the Operatic Nymph, and her hateful offspring, obtruded itself also, and with it a painful sense of my father's previous sternness, and unmitigated indifference to her hapless, though erring predecessor. I was convinced that (however revolting to my soul) the truth had been spoken; I felt as it were precipitated from that station to which I had hitherto believed myself entitled, and sunk under the conviction of my own degraded condition;—hope vanished, and miserable dreams, with confused ideas of things as they were, and things as they were not, haunted my aching brain with their cruel mockery, until the tumult of delirium terminated in the stupor of insensibility.

It was during this period of agony and sickness, that my new friend Cleveland displayed all the goodness of his heart towards me. He

watched by my bedside with fraternal assiduity and solicitude ; his kindness was both judicious and persevering, and the obligations received and conferred on this occasion, have neither been forgotten nor cancelled. He was not a prominent person, which happened to be the result of choice, not of insignificance. He disliked publicity, and conceived that notoriety was rather a stain than a credit ; he therefore avoided every opportunity of becoming 'conspicuous. Studying without display for learning's sake with considerable success, his mild contemplative cast of disposition shrank from notice ; and although the best scholar amongst us, without exception, had the rare fortune, and still rarer sense to escape the dangerous *eclat* of superiority, neither exciting the envy nor ill will of others less gifted or less studious than himself. Somewhat shy and retiring in his temper, all had found him nevertheless a steady friend in the time of need, ready and willing to oblige those who required either advice or assistance. I recovered about holiday time, a hum-

bled creature, and on returning to Desmond Hall, protested against ever re-entering the theatre of my recent mortification and disgrace.

I found my father much changed in his appearance, looking older and thinner;—time had commenced the slow but unerring work of destruction. His handsome forehead was wrinkled and contracted with care; his smile, once so eloquent, was expressive more of bitterness than of joy; the rich curls of brown hair that formerly clustered on his brow, were thickly interspersed with grey, and had become scarce on the temples; his eye alone retained its fire, but even that feature was sunk and hollow; and I could not deceive myself as to the perceptible alteration which the course of a year or two had gradually wrought, and wondered at the disastrous effects produced by causes I could neither divine nor understand.

His reception was kind, even more so than usual; but a cloud, a heavy cloud, which defied my penetration, and evidently depressed his spirits, hung over him.

“My dear boy,” said he, opening a conversation in which I felt exceedingly interested : “How can I ever express my sentiments towards you ?—my deep and lasting regret that you should have endured so much bitter humiliation ? In rearing you I have been guilty of a great error ; let us hope that its consequences are not irreparable. This unlucky affair at school originated chiefly in my own unpardonable neglect ; I was wrong in allowing you to remain so long in ignorance of the disadvantageous circumstances in which you are most unfortunately placed ; but believe me, when I assure you that the parental regard which I have ever manifested, is not the weaker on that account. I only wish you were the rightful heir to the Glenmore title ; but the sins of my youth are now visited on my declining years, and I am condemned to see my son, my first-born, my noble spirited boy, stigmatised, and insulted. I always hated the Percivals, an odious supercilious race, incapable of a generous impulse.

You, Charles, have proved true to the hereditary instinct. Oh! I am glad, right glad, you thrashed the coward who taunted you with the very misfortune to which he owes his own bright prospects."

"Father," said I, interrupting him, "you have not yet told me all: where is my mother? Who was she? — Oh! let me hear the whole tale of misery at once!"

"Ask me not,—spare me, dear child!" murmured he, averting his face, which had become pale and agitated from emotion. I caught his hand within my own, and pressed it with respectful fervour to my lips, sinking on my knees before him.

"Dearest father, forgive me! speak to your own Charley: why do you recoil from my caresses? Say that you love me still."

"I love you," replied he, in hoarse and measured tones; "I love you, as I once loved *her*, but less rashly. There was a time when your mother was dear to me beyond all earthly possessions, and yet I crushed her meek and tender



heart, with cruelty and neglect. Spare me! oh, spare me, these sad confessions! She was a sweet and contrite being. I have a fearful responsibility that weighs heavily upon my soul. But, Charles, you must not condemn your father; let my sins claim forbearance, as my affection has been overweening. Be not you my judge or my accuser; in future this melancholy subject must be avoided, the chord yet vibrates in my heart. I cannot explain farther; but although the laws of the realm debar you from all enjoyment and participation of that estate which I should be proud and happy to bequeath you, in spite of my juvenile extravagance and lavish expenditure I shall be enabled to make up a few thousands to provide for those I brought into life. Economy is the order of the day," added he, smiling; "it may be practised in private, as well as in the public exchequer. You will receive an university education, and have the means of supporting yourself with the aid of a profession, which you are at liberty to select according to your taste. As

long as I live, my house, and my affections, will be open to you."

"One more request, my lord," said I, gravely. "Allow me to discontinue the name of Desmond, which, till now, I prized from its antiquity: let me assume some appellation more in accordance with my present humble station."

"Oh, Charles! Charles!" observed my father, with a voice of gentle reproof, "do you wish to cast off the name I gave you?"

"No; but I do not want to keep that to which I have no claim."

"True;" returned he, with a sigh of regret, "you, probably are right in your decision; it might lead to inquiry through life, and entail future mortification, which it is your interest to avoid. Still be my son, my own dear boy; but as you desire it, abdicate the name of Desmond; it has proved a mischievous appendage. You were baptized Charles Harcourt, that being my mother's maiden appellation, to which in the blindness of parental joy I superadded my own.

You shall now be styled 'Harcourt' only, that distinction will be sufficient. — And now," continued he, more cheerfully, "you will be sent to Eton; here are the sinews of war to begin with."

I received a cordial pressure of the hand, accompanied by a pocket-book well garnished with bank of England notes to meet my youthful expenses.

"To conclude," rejoined his lordship, firmly, "I must give you a little necessary advice, to regulate your future conduct:—beware of drawing annoyance and impertinence upon yourself; keep people at a proper distance; assume no insolent presumption, but never allow man or boy to attack you with impunity. Learn how to unite modesty and dignity; without overstepping the one, preserve the other from all infringement. Apropos: your friend Edmund Cleveland is also to be at Eton; cultivate his esteem and regard; he is rather quiet to suit the taste of the majority, but he has excellent and valuable qualities; he behaved particularly

well with respect to your quarrel with Percival, and evinced the greatest kindness during your illness. Besides which, a steady companion in early life is a valuable acquisition." A deep sigh interrupted this sentence. "You know," proceeded he, "that this youth is the son of a most respectable country gentleman, who is possessed of considerable landed property in this very county. Belmont Lodge is not more than seven or eight miles from hence; the Clevelands do not inhabit the place at present, as they are residing in London for the education of their daughters. Remember, that I approve of your acquaintance and growing intimacy with this young man; try and make him your friend, and you will act wisely."

On the conclusion of this conversation, I withdrew from my father's presence with the conviction of his being an altered person: dissipation had impaired health and fortune; the opera-dancer, who had been the means of my mother's expulsion, (for such her voluntary departure might be considered), had absconded

(during my sojourn at school) with a *noble* visitor of her generous protector, who had previously won bets to a large amount from his incautious host, whom it appears he duped in more ways than one. The two children, whom I detested once, but whose degraded position assimilated so completely with my own, that I now deemed them brothers in misfortune, were domesticated at Desmond Hall after the fashion of tame kittens, or pet spaniels, or any other playful inoffensive animals, not claiming any share of rational consideration, but tolerated as a source of occasional amusement to Lord Esdale and his household.

I had naturally begun to hate my little brothers less; my heart now softened towards their neglected and helpless innocence; the sting of jealousy, and the germ of discord had been rudely extracted, and as I required the support of fraternal attachment, I was the more inclined to bestow it upon those who were entitled to it. I plainly saw that my father was no longer the reckless character that he was once,—the dark

hour of retribution had struck ; and on taking my leave of him, previous to entering Eton College, I discovered, during that painful and confidential interview, that Viscount Esdale was a prey to remorse.

## CHAPTER II.

Now hatred is by far the longest pleasure,  
Men love in haste, but they detest at leisure.

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

Oh, that I could but mate him in his might,  
Oh, that we were on the dark wave together,  
With but one plank between us and destruction,  
That I might grasp him in these desperate arms,  
And plunge with him among the weltering billows,  
And view him gasp for life!

MATURIN, *Bertram*.

•   •   •   The sound,  
As in the stream he plunged, was heard around,  
Then all was still — the wave was rough no more,  
The river swept as sweetly as before,  
And peace returning brooded o'er the scene.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

HITHERTO I had been perfectly ignorant of my father's family, and the names of his connections, of whom he saw but little. I had only collected that the ancient earldom of Glenmore was handed down in one unbroken line to my

grandfather, who had one son and two daughters, the eldest of which, Lady Katherine, married into the Percival family much against the wishes of her friends, and was never noticed afterwards by Lord Glenmore, which prohibition extended to her children. This dislike was increased as, in consequence of the failure of legitimate issue in the male line, the title would eventually devolve on the offspring of Lady Katherine. Her ladyship being dead, Augustus stood next in succession, much to the annoyance of the venerable earl, who constantly urged Lord Esdale to marry and cut out Percival; but my father did not commit matrimony; so the earldom was destined to fall into the female line included in the patent.

With clouded prospects and broken spirits I arrived at Eton, where my existence was similar to that of others, and glided away in the pursuit of knowledge, and the enjoyment of recreation, attended with that due portion of pleasure and pain, which constitute the mingled yarn of school-boy life, the miniature manhood of



which we are fated in after years to re-act the extended drama, on a different scale, in a more effective manner, on a more vast arena, before a more varied audience, to a worse and sadder purpose. I confess that the system of fagging at first raised many rebellious emotions. I could hardly stem the unwarrantable degradation. Much has been said on the subject, for and against, much more will be said, and probably in time the abuse will be abolished. Education should be conducted on a principle of perfect equality: even-handed justice should preside in the courts of learning; no distinction should be permitted but those of genius, industrious application to study, and virtuous emulation. Every regulation calculated to degrade the timid and younger pupils to a state of mean subordination, also tends to elevate the elder and most turbulent spirits into petty despots. The weakness of the one party constitutes the might of the other, and power becomes the appendage of strength rather than of merit. However, I write dispassionately, and leave the sub-

ject to abler hands, for the monitor under whom I served the term of my probation was not worse (perhaps better) than the rest of embryo tyrants, being, like other people in power, unjustifiably capricious ; so between alternate bullying and coaxing, my slavery reached its conclusion without the occurrence of any particular event to mark its progress.

Circumstances had greatly isolated me ; I felt no wish to obtain the suffrages, court the society, or claim the sympathy of my school-fellows ; a deep sense of inferiority pinioned me to the earth ; I did not brood in sullenness, but I felt (oh how keenly !) the extreme loneliness of my situation : in the midst of companions I was in solitude ; it seemed as if each possessed connections, inheritance,—above all, a parentage, and a home to which they had an undoubted right ; and what was I, but the spurious offspring of illicit passion, cut off from every hereditary advantage ?—the link between my comrades and myself was that of circumstance, not similarity of position.

I must, however, make an exception in favour of Cleveland, who was my friend in the fullest sense of the word : he was acquainted with the occult workings of my inmost soul, and that in itself would have been sufficient to unite us, had he not proved the noble-minded, kind, and generous being I ever found him. Edmund was both my senior and superior in every respect ; he assisted, directed and encouraged my studies, obviating the difficulties, and pointing out the advantages of learning. We were much together ; the calm philosophical seriousness which characterised his disposition, shed a milder influence on the impetuosity of mine ; by the gentlest persuasion and most convincing reasoning, he endeavoured to counteract, and uproot those bitter feelings which I allowed to take possession of my mind.

We had not been many months at Eton, when, to our surprise and my own individual annoyance, Augustus Percival came amongst us. This was a blow I had not anticipated ; my aversion having rather increased

than diminished, I now considered him as a sort of natural enemy, the creature of all others who had the power of wounding and crushing me, destined as he was, to batten on my father's lands—assume his dignities—and bear his name—that name *I* had relinquished. He knew also the history of my origin, and the history of my mother,—that mother, whose graceful image still lingered in my childish fancy,—that mother whom I still cherished in the inmost recesses of my soul, and whose majestic form I still traced through the lengthened vista of receding years; he had blackened *her*, and he was the only being who had the heart to do so. Lord Esdale pitied, although he had injured her; and Cleveland, who was unacquainted with the particulars, confessed that his parents had spoken of her frailty more in sorrow than in anger. I hated Percival with an intensity that gave a colouring to the monotony of my existence, and felt that I could live for the mere purpose of detesting him. I used every honourable means of gaining a supremacy over my enemy; for *his*

sake at least, I began to seek popularity; I studied night and day in order to obtain every premium for which he contended, and my labours, assisted by Cleveland's rich and varied acquirements, did not remain abortive. With mingled generosity and kindness, he directed my energies to the highest objects of literary ambition, and whilst encouraging my efforts, raised my desires beyond the puerile rivalry of college animosity, pointing out a nobler aim than the petty triumphs of academical success. This competition, however unworthy it may appear, extended to things of lesser moment than classical excellence. Augustus and myself were constantly opposed to each other in the veriest trifles; in cricket matches, rowing matches, feats of strength, activity and skill, we repeatedly wrested the palm from each other; we had our separate cabal, and various adherents. I became a slave to my ruling passion, and underwent fatigue, exertion, hard study, and intense application, to obtain the goal of my ambition. Cleveland used all his influence to

moderate the violence of this party spirit, which pervaded every action, and repressed the exuberance of youthful feeling, by all the efforts in his power: he often pointed out the imprudence and inexpediency of rashly incurring the vindictive enmity of my father's heir-at-law: "Even if you cannot alter the nature of your sentiments towards him, at least control the manifestation of your excessive dislike," observed Cleveland, with frequent admonitions, which unfortunately did not always meet the attention deserved. But although Edmund privately opposed my headlong wilfulness, he was in fact, my most strenuous supporter, and like a true friend, defended my feebleness without encouraging my errors. My regard for him could only be equalled by my hatred to Augustus; it seemed the very mainspring of my existence; without that, life would have lost its stimulant. Some live for fame, power, love, riches, and honours;—I concentrated the essence of all in my rooted antipathy.

A triumph, however, was in store, that com-

pletely obliterated every trace of past annoyance and degradation, the remembrance of which has often since compensated for many bitter hours of sadness and adversity. I was partial to boating ; I courted the refreshing balmy breeze that sometimes ruffled the glittering bosom of the Thames ; I felt soothed by the pleasing murmurs of its rippling waves ; I watched the flexible branches of the surrounding trees, gently bending their graceful foliage, as if in admiration of their own reflected luxuriance ; I listened to the distant sounds of boyish glee, as the tumultuous shout and mirthful laugh was conveyed in softened echoes along the shore ; I loved to float upon the silvery surface, and look with eager curiosity towards its transparent depths, to indulge wild poetic dreams of . . . futurity. The insulated situation was congenial to my taste, to my own wayward destiny, to which it seemed to bear a striking similitude. No kindred links attached me to the vast social mass ; no moorings bound my little skiff to the rapidly receding bank ; it floated on, following the im-

petus of wind and tide; tossed to and fro on the undulating waters, it resembled the uncertainty of human life. There at least I felt happy; it appeared as if I left my cares and anxieties on land, and my thoughts, unshackled by companionship, bounded as freely as the liquid element to which my small craft was confided.

One lovely day in the midst of summer, gliding with the fluctuating stream, and half absorbed in a delicious reverie,—such as youth loves to indulge,—I neared a group of bathers, some of whom were already in the water, whilst others were yet employed undressing themselves. The lover's eye may recognise the distant object of his passion through a widened interval of space, but not more quickly than the keen perception of hate descries the identity of a foe; indeed I give the preference to the more rapid penetration of the latter; for time will fade the fair form of our heart's idolatry,—affection will then look in vain for the charms of beauty, and the blooming grace of youth;



but the deadly glance of an enemy can never be forgotten.

Percival was swimming far off from his companions; he evidently displayed his best, in doing which he inadvertently approached the deepest part of the river, which was full of eddies, with a strong under-current.

“Not there! not there, Percival!” was loudly shouted from the bank, and presently a piercing shriek proclaimed that Augustus was seized with the cramp; and the circling waters were rapidly closing over his helpless form. What a thrill darted through me on beholding my enemy powerless, plunging in the agonies of a violent death! One moment more, and I was freed from his blasting influence for ever! — *That* viper’s tongue would be paralyzed,—that hand, which had contended with mine, would be nerveless,—that eye, which had darted insult and reproach, would be closed. One person alone had the power to save him; in vain his friends shouted from the bank; the swimmer dared not, could not venture farther. I alone

could hold out a helping hand, and that would be at the risk of my own safety.

“Save him, Harcourt! for God’s sake near your boat!” screamed the assembled bathers, in the utmost consternation. Oh! the tumultuous throbbing of my heart at that moment of intense anxiety. My brain whirled as I saw my enemy sinking, perishing before my eyes; —to count the throes of mortal struggle; to see him rise on the surface once! —twice! —to plunge in—and save him—it was too much . . . I caught him just as his presence of mind was deserting him; he clung to me with the gripe of death, which nearly prevented me from gaining the land. However, my efforts were successful; in a few minutes I laid the senseless form of Augustus on the soft grass, and we were both surrounded by inquiring and applauding faces. I was nearly overpowered with fatigue and strong emotion; twenty cordial hands were extended towards me, and grasped mine with friendly solicitude.

“Well done, Harcourt!” you are a fine fel-

low!!” was the flattering greeting that welcomed me. The warm and enthusiastic encomiums of my comrades circulated swiftly from mouth to mouth; I was a sort of hero in the estimation of my partizans, and an object of interest and esteem to my former opponents. I received a public compliment from the head master, and gained the universal suffrages of all parties. Augustus Percival’s life was saved at the expense of a severe fit of illness, which nearly consigned him to that tomb from whence he had been rescued. My first meeting with Cleveland after this memorable occurrence nearly unmanned us both; he knew the secret aspirations of my soul, — all the combined weakness and violence of my feelings; he fathomed the deep and craving abyss of insatiable hatred, and hoped this eventful circumstance, would close the open wounds of irritated and exaggerated sensibility; he could scarcely articulate, and clasping me to his friendly bosom, dropped a tear of tender affection on my burning brow, that sealed the silent compact

of unalterable attachment, which has since withstood the corroding canker of time, and the trials of adversity. A few days after this incident of stirring interest to the collegians, I received the following missive from Lord Esdale.

“MY DEAREST BOY,

“You are a noble youth, and I indeed a happy father. — Charles, you have gratified my parental pride, by saving Percival’s worthless life; you risked your own, however, which was a piece of heroism the wretch did not deserve; but those who are born to hang can never drown. I think I should have been strongly tempted, myself, to allow the ungenerous creature to have shifted as he might, and cool the warmth of his animosity amongst the Thames flounders.—You have raised yourself above him, and he must ever look up to you as his preserver.

“Receive my blessing, dear child. If you want cash, I will send some: in the meantime, accept a horse as a token of regard from your

“Affectionate father,

*Desmond Hall, 20th August, 182—.*

“ESDALE.”

The same post brought a parcel directed to — Harcourt, Esq. A jeweller's small red morroco *étui* contained a splendid watch, chain, and seals, with a note from Percival's father, expressive of his gratitude, requesting, me to wear the watch, "whose every vibration would record a father's acknowledgments to the deliverer of his only son." From the tenor of this epistle, it was evident that Mr. Percival neither knew who I was, nor the rivalry that had so long existed between myself and Augustus ; he had apparently written on hearing the first account of the accident, forwarded by his son's tutor, and was yet in perfect ignorance as to our consanguinity. I returned the golden bauble with the following reply :

"Mr. Harcourt presents his respects and thanks to Mr. Percival, and regrets he is compelled to decline accepting the valuable '*souvenir*.' Mr. H. has a long-standing debt of feeling to settle with Mr. Augustus Percival, which he cannot now cancel, by compromising his self-respect.

"*Eton, 23rd August, 182—.*"

In due time, I finished my studies, and quitted Eton with considerable *eclat*, which was equally flattering to my father as to me. I returned to Desmond Hall, a prouder and a happier creature than when I quitted it. Although I felt nothing on earth could induce me to be intimate with Augustus, we were at least on civil speaking terms ; and our hostility was no longer apparent ; yet I verily believe the sentiments of our hearts were not less intense.

## CHAPTER III.

I hae naebody now—I hae naebody now  
 To meet me upon the green,  
 Wi' light locks waving o'er her brow  
 An' joy in her deep blue e'en ;  
 Wi' the soft kiss an' happy smile,  
 An' the dance of the lightsome fay,  
 An' the wee bit tale o' news the while  
 That happened when I was away.

*Ettrick Shepherd.*

Alas ! that man should ever win  
 So sweet a shrine to shame and sin  
 As woman's heart.

*L. E. L.*

The sun shone brightly, as it used to do,  
 Ere youth, and hope, and love had been untrue ;  
 But it shone o'er the desolate.

*L. E. L.*

I WAS much disappointed on leaving Eton, to find that Cleveland was destined for Oxford, whilst it was intended I should proceed to Cambridge ; so we were to be separated to our mu-

tual regret. Previous to entering the university I remained a short time with my father, who seemed fast decliping. One of the children had died, and the other was growing up a sickly boy ; the jovial companions who had ministered to Lord Esdale's pleasures, pandered to his dissipation, and encouraged his propensities, fell off one by one, seeking more youthful associates, richer patrons, and a merrier circle ; the once brilliant and agreeable Viscount was dwindling into an elderly man, worn with hard living, and oppressed by the recollection of a mis-spent life. He succeeded to the estates and titles of the Earl of Glenmore (who died at this juncture), with an impaired constitution, broken spirits, and long-standing debts, increased by numerous post obits with which he had contrived to diminish his patrimony, and which he was now obliged to pay off with accumulated interest.

The new earl received my filial embrace and heartfelt aspirations with cordiality. " Wealth and honours, my dear Charles," said he, " are come too late; they are almost useless now : the



bloom of life is passed, and I nipped its flowers in the bud ; but I will not degenerate into drivelling sentiment. When all my creditors are paid, I shall at least have the satisfaction of providing handsomely for you ; that poor delicate child will be a legacy I shall leave to your generosity. You were jealous once of those unfortunate brats, one of whom is already provided for with a green sod and six-feet freehold ; but I think better of you than to suppose you continue to harbour a hostile feeling against a brother who owes his being to the same father and same ill-directed passions as yourself."

I earnestly promised my cheerful acquiescence to his wishes, sincerely hoping that many, many years might elapse before I should be called upon to fulfil such melancholy injunctions ; and started for Cambridge, where I was exceedingly well received, a favourable report from Eton having preceded my arrival. Thither, however, Augustus Percival soon followed ; and by him my birth, parentage, and unfortunate position were duly talked over, and eagerly disseminated. I

could not expect that he would remain silent in my regard. We were, nevertheless, on a footing of distant civility, and he always harped on the "sort of family connection" that existed between us, by way of keeping me in subjection. This intimation was ever accompanied by a tone and look of protecting hauteur, that withered my heart. The tacit rivalry still kept up between us had lost its school-boy characteristic violence. I wished for superiority, and studied hard to obtain it: he sought to outshine me in horses, grooms, dogs, entertainments, wine, and women; in all of which liberal pursuits he succeeded beyond a doubt. He was followed, flattered, and caressed by the multitude, whilst I had the inexpressible satisfaction of claiming a few estimable friends.

My university career was replete with college adventures, like other young men; I was tempted to indulge in a little chicken-hazard, at which I lost a tolerable share of the pocket-money most generously supplied by my father, and drank enough to discover that its con-

sequences were fatal to moral elevation, and physical comfort. The dissipation of Cambridge wanted dignity; the juvenile follies there committed had no charms for me. I felt as if one strong all-absorbing passion might master the nobler propensities; but I had no feelings to fritter in the every-day commonplace of a student's life. I tasted of the cup of pleasure, but it did not produce sufficient intoxication to deprive me of the power of relinquishing it, so that I was generally considered as a steady fellow, although my conscience does not permit my taking much merit on the occasion.

A circumstance occurred during the latter period of my sojourn, in which I was at first merely a spectator; but its termination involved many events which seriously influenced my subsequent destiny. In my numerous solitary rides and walks (for I frequently indulged in both) I fell in with a pretty and interesting country girl: like any other man or boy, not quite callous to the charms of a nice woman, I followed her at a prudent interval until I tracked her home,

which was situated at some distance from the town, in a remote green lane, that branched off from the outskirts of a straggling village.

The tidy well white-washed cottage presented an aspect above absolute want, as there was an attempt at the cultivation of ornamental shrubs, beyond the thrifty herbs and fragrant rosemary which flourished in green and yellow hardihood ; but this neatness appeared rather to be the result of industrious habits, and tasteful arrangement, than of affluence ; as the sundry willow baskets piled before the door, proclaimed the handicraft on which the inmates depended for subsistence.

The spot was rural and romantic indeed, for Cambridge. I was curious to see and learn more of my fair incognita, for my youthful imagination kindled with the idea of beauty combined with mystery and solitude. On the following day I returned to the lane with a latent hope of improving the acquaintance already half commenced ; but my attempt was unsuccessful, for instead of the blooming girl I had met on

the preceding occasion, I beheld a man conducted by a small terrier, from whose constrained movements I conjectured the master to be blind. His exterior denoted poverty, and his long grey hair fell on shoulders that were rounded and bent forward with accumulated years. He sought the genial warmth of the noon-day sun, whose dazzling rays no longer scorched his sightless orbs. His hands were soon busily employed weaving osiers and willows, while his attention was apparently absorbed, listening to the clear cheerful voice that issued from within the house, and announced with pleasing melody that the village belle was a songstress.

I retired unobserved, and on meeting a farmer's boy at a little distance, made some inquiries concerning the inhabitants of the cottage.

"Why, sir," answered the countryman, "you must mean poor old John Smith: he was once well to do in the farming line, an honest good soul; he was rather too easy-like in his ways. Then his dame died; she left him with a slip of a daughter,—nice girl enough;

but the times got bad, and John's sight began to fail; he had no sons to look after crops and stock. Mary had plenty to mind indoors, so they got poor and down in the world; but Smith being an upright man, was not quite put on the parish. Neighbours helped him a bit, and his landlord took the farm off his hands. Now he lives in the white cottage, as you see, and turns a penny with his baskets, that are handy enough. Mary is the joy and comfort of his life. She is hard-working and industrious, and sings like a bird from morning till night. We lads think her somewhat *over-proud*, for there is no coming near her; and the old folks hereabout are all hoping that none of the young gentlemen from town will be casting their eyes on poor Mary Smith."

I thanked the rustic for his information, and taking the hint conveyed in the last sentence, returned to my chambers with half a determination never to frequent the same road again.

Why, indeed, should I seek the conquest of the unobtrusive Mary, and destroy a blind

man's child, his treasure and consolation? So I resolved to leave the innocent cottage-maid to her aged parent, merry songs and useful avocations. I was, however, strongly interested, and often thought of Mary's sweet voice and elastic step, which at first attracted my notice.

Contrary to my positive intentions, I was tempted some weeks after to loiter in the direction of the green lane; and one Sunday afternoon I strolled into the village church, which I supposed John Smith and his daughter would attend. My conjectures were not disappointed; they were there, but Mary was certainly altered; though not an iota less pretty, rather more *piquante*; as there was a restlessness in her eye that increased her animation. I could not approve of her dress: the rustic straw which had hitherto shaded her delicate features, was superseded by something more fashionable, and less interesting; and her general appearance betokened a style far above her condition. I perceived that she merely joined in the outward form of evening worship; there

was no piety, no humble prayer or grateful thanksgiving manifested; and I sauntered from the church under a conviction that Mary's mind was not as spotless as her complexion.

The afternoon was one of delicious freshness, and beguiled me far into the country, through woody glens and waving corn fields; following a train of delightful reverie, until the shades of evening deepening o'er the landscape, warned me that it was time to veer my course homewards. My road to the city lay exactly through the lane, in which Smith's cottage was situated; it was nearly dark when I entered it; a few stars began to glimmer in the blue firmament, which was now and then shut from my view by the thick branches that closed in graceful arches overhead. At a short distance from the paternal roof was Mary, but not alone; an arm encircled her neat waist, and the soft whispers of a well-known voice murmured words of flattering import to her willing ear. A faint reply was urged, in which I distinctly caught the name of "father," but the concluding phrases were sup-



pressed on her ruby lips by warm and glowing kisses. Augustus was the tempter! Inexpressible anguish filled my soul on beholding this hateful reptile profane the blushing rose I had left to shed its fragrance o'er the thorny path of a sightless parent. As the conviction of his base intentions burst upon me, I was impelled to rush forward, and save her from destruction. I hesitated at becoming a secret spy on the actions of any one; but before I could overtake them, they reached the little wicket leading to the cottage. Mary glided through it like a fairy, and lifting the latch with the utmost circumspection, entered the house, closing the door for the ensuing night.

"Mr. Percival," said I, accosting him boldly, "I fear we both are late for evening service?"

"Harcourt!" exclaimed he, with unfeigned surprise, "how came you here? have you presumed to watch my movements?"

"I did not, sir," answered I coolly; "but most unintentionally on my part, I saw and heard some portion of your conversation."

Augustus seemed doubtful as to a plan of evasion; whether cunning or bravado would prove most effective in silencing my observations. The former appeared most feasible; when he replied, with a degree of politeness:

“I depend on your honour, Harcourt: you will not make a bad use of any thing you witnessed: these little love affairs are not worth quarrelling about.”

“I am neither a listener nor public accuser,” said I, firmly.—“My discovery, sir, was purely accidental; yet I must tell you, that you are acting a very cruel, if not a very dishonourable part. That young woman is the sole ray of comfort to her blind father: no man could have the heart to blight that poor creature’s fame.”

“Upon my word! you are really eloquent!” returned Augustus, with a sneer. “Preparing for the church, or the law, I presume;—a capital beginning!—but, my dear fellow, if we are on the same scent, which I strongly suspect, we may soon understand each other.”

"Do not misapprehend me," cried I, interrupting him.

"Now do not be puritanical, Harcourt," observed Percival, with acuteness; "we may get on very well if you will just put aside that knight-errant look and manner;—you quite frighten me;—'pon my soul, you do!—Though," added he, with affected gaiety—

"I pledge my word——"

"Don't pledge any thing," cried he, with a laugh that rung like a knell through the air.

"Let us manage matters in an orderly, gentlemanly manner. I hate altercation. The girl has struck my fancy; and we are both men of taste and discernment. We will take things quietly, one after another: do you understand me rightly?"

"Understand you!" replied I, doubting the sense of hearing. "Scarcely, Percival. I am no puritan, as you facetiously term it, nor do I disclaim any share in the adventures which have fallen to my lot; but I was not prepared for the strange observations that you have

dropped. In answer to which, I now assure you, on my honour as a gentleman, Mary Smith is nothing to me. I never accosted her; and I doubt if she knows me even by sight. I candidly confess her beauty attracted my notice; and the admiration she inspired, naturally excited a feeling of curiosity with respect to her name and condition, which I inquired of a farmer's boy some days since."

"It was then with the pleasing view of improving the acquaintance so auspiciously commenced," replied my companion, with provoking self-possession, "that you have thus kindly undertaken to watch my movements."

"Listen to me, sir, if you can," said I, mustering a sentiment of indignation that prompted me to knock him down. "On finding that Mary was the virtuous daughter of an afflicted man, I resolved to respect her innocence, and avoid the danger of temptation."

"Very fine, indeed, Mr. Harcourt!" replied the impertinent puppy;—"Scipio Africanus, number two;—quite refreshing!"

“Percival, if you have a soul, or the heart of a man,” said I, earnestly, “do not destroy that young creature: leave her to embellish the sphere for which she is intended: let her blush and bloom in native sweetness, under the soft shade of her own green lane. We both of us will promise never to disturb its solitude again.”

“Most touching!” answered Augustus, artfully.—“Well, perhaps you are right, Harcourt. I begin to think with you, we might as well give up the chase: it would be an awkward affair, if a case of seduction was made out, and get to the knowledge of the higher powers; it might end badly: so, if you are content to relinquish the game, I am.”

“Thank you, thank you, Percival,” said I, overjoyed at the apparent change in his ideas.

“You must promise, however, my good fellow,” replied Augustus, with an air of candour that quite relieved me, “that you will not breathe a word of what has passed to any living soul. You will not, of course, endeavour to see

Mary, or continue farther interference;—give me your word.”

“Willingly,” cried I; “on condition you make no future attempt to undermine her virtue.”

“If you exact it,” observed Augustus, with a fervour and solemnity that completely dispelled any lingering doubt I might have harboured, “I will pledge my sacred word;—that will satisfy you?”

“Enough, enough, Percival!” interrupted I, extending my hand with sincerity: on which we parted, as our lodgings were in different streets, and our conversation had led us unwarily close to the town, which we entered by separate suburbs.

Augustus was now another being in my estimation; though it was with difficulty I could reconcile the promise he had just given, with the general tenor of his language, conduct, and disposition. Still he had pledged his honour; and I felt angry with myself for allowing a shade of mistrust to darken my mind, and per-

mitting any illiberal recollections of personal pique to bias the equity of my judgment.

Faithful to my engagements, the whole affair was buried in oblivion; and I religiously adhered to my determination of avoiding Mary, and even shunned the very neighbourhood of the green-lane she inhabited.

Percival and I had become nearly friends, since the rencontre; and I found him better behaved when we happened to come in contact. My prejudice began to appear unfounded; and I hoped that the insolent, tyrannical, and dissipated youth might yet sober into a respectable man.

Six months elapsed: we were preparing to pass our examination. I applied intensely to my studies, in hopes of taking a degree; and for some time, Augustus had also led a most retired life: so it was generally concluded that he was quite a reformed character.

Summer had gradually ripened into autumn, which, in its turn, had withered into winter. The trees were clothed with hoar frost, and the

congealed earth echoed crisply under the elastic step. Tired with my books, I called for my horse, and inadvertently found myself in the direction of \* \* \* church. It was now a whole half year since last I had walked this road, and returned in company with Percival. My word had been sacred ; I supposed his was equally so ; and the cheerful sound of Mary's merry voice would greet me as I passed through the lane, now strewn with brown leaves and broken branches. At this moment, a tolling bell swept mournfully on the blast. I shuddered ; for it was an unexpected interruption. I approached the cottage ; the once gaudy flower-knots were neglected and frozen ; the sweet-scented creeper, that had clung in fantastic gracefulness to the porch and windows, trailed recklessly on the ground ; the shutters were partially closed, but the door stood half-open ; and the sound of measured steps within was soon followed by the appearance of a funeral train that issued from the cottage at a slow pace, and proceeded towards the village church. The bearers looked



grave;—mourners there were none: a few sympathizing neighbours walked in decent order; but, except the dog, that still pursued the lifeless corpse of his once-kind master, there were no mourners. John Smith was dead; but where was Mary?—grief, perhaps, prevented her attendance.

I led my horse slowly to the burial-ground, and beheld from a distance the remains of John Smith consigned to kindred clay. The rustic procession dispersed by degrees: the dog alone moved not, and laid himself on the new-filled grave. I also had turned away, when I perceived the honest countenance of my quondam friend, the farmer's-boy; who again answered my inquiries by the painful intelligence that Mary had been "'ticed away by a fine young gentleman from college. She abandoned her father's humble roof through shame, rather than through wantonness, being, as the matrons observed, quite altered in shape. Poor old Smith had pined his loss in solitude and darkness, uncheered but by the fidelity of a dog, and the

rude consolations of his neighbours. Nothing could extract the sting of his child's ingratitude. John never smiled again ; the last gleam of earthly happiness was obscured ; Mary was gone ; and he died !”

Such was the substance of the countryman's information ; and I knew not if pity, sorrow, or anger, were most predominant. I dropped a tear on the grave, and offered a five-pound note to my interlocutor, requesting that he would take care of the dog when hunger might induce it to leave the cemetery.

Percival's cruel duplicity had wrought the work of devastation : he was the human fiend who had brought ruin on the cottage and its hapless inmates. I returned to my chambers with feelings wound up to a pitch of violent excitement ; but was unable to indulge the tender pity, or the justifiable indignation which filled my breast, as I was engaged to meet some fellow-students at the house of a mutual friend, where it was proposed we should discuss the subject of our thesis. Percival was there :

I shunned the look of recognition with which he greeted my arrival. A parallel between the British poets was the subject given; but my mental agitation increased to such a degree, I was scarcely capable of understanding what passed.

"I am sure, Harcourt," observed Percival, with a sarcastic glance, "you have a fine field for your genius. The life of Savage must suit you, and awaken a sympathetic chord, as the novel-writers say." These words released the storm compressed within me,

"Coward!—liar!" cried I, with inarticulate fury; "you dare not insult me farther.—Remember Mary!" I fixed my eyes full on him: he assumed a hue of deadly paleness; but with infinite presence of mind turned to the party assembled, and said:

"Gentlemen, you bear witness that Mr. Harcourt has insulted *me*."

## CHAPTER IV.

Mon cœur revient à Dieu plus docile et plus tendre,  
 Et de ses châtimens perdant le souvenir,  
 Comme un enfant soumis n'ose lui faire entendre  
 Qu'un murmure amoureux pour se plaindre et bénir.

Que le deuil de mon âme étoit lugubre et sombre !  
 Que de nuits sans pâvots, que de jours sans soleil !  
 Que de fois j' ai compté le pas du temps dans l'ombre,  
 Quand les heures passaient sans mener le sommeil.

Mais loin de moi ces tems, que l'oubli les devore,  
 Ce qui n'est plus pour l'homme a-t-il jamais été ;  
 Quelques jours sont perdus, mais le bonheur encore,  
 Peut fleurir sous mes yeux comme une fleur d'été.

*Meditations de LAMARTINE.*

*Animum illius fregit hæc calamitas.*

CICERO.

A CHALLENGE was the immediate result of the events detailed in the last chapter. Cleveland not being with me, I was compelled to have recourse to the good offices of a stranger, who

assisted me in the formalities of conducting a hostile meeting.

Augustus Percival, accompanied by a fellow-student, was punctual to the hour we had named, and arrived at the appointed place of rendezvous at the same moment with myself and second, who immediately endeavoured to follow the established custom of settling the difference between us in a manner calculated to give equal satisfaction to all parties; but our sentiments had never been of such an amicable nature as to admit the conciliatory efforts of our well-meaning companions. Had we merely obeyed the dictates of worldly prejudice, and sought, by exchanging a couple of shots, to repair the insults we had mutually inflicted and sustained, a mediator might have succeeded in calming the effervescence of a passing quarrel, and proclaiming that both gentlemen had behaved themselves in the most unexceptionable manner. How far different were our feelings to those of the generality who challenge each other with reluctance, and swallow the most

indigestible apology with complacency!—The opportunity thus afforded of manifesting the aversion which so long had fermented in our hearts, was not to be cast aside. The social restraint which had, in a great measure, been imposed upon our enmity, was removed, and we stood face to face, with the avowed purpose of shedding blood, and neither seemed disposed to relinquish one tittle of the horrid privilege of honourable revenge.

The morning was both cold and damp, every surrounding object was veiled in mist, which scarcely permitted us to see ten yards beyond the actual spot on which we were standing. The ground was measured—twelve paces intervened between myself and my detested adversary. It is impossible to describe the intense interest, the torturing suspense, of such a moment. The seconds proceeded to the business of priming and loading; after which, we received the murderous weapons from which we expected either death or victory—if such a term can express the fearful triumph of single

combat.—I grasped my pistol convulsively, and tried to look in a determined manner at the figure of my antagonist, as the dim outline was faintly descried through the grey vapour. My pulse beat high with feverish excitement. I panted for the signal.

There he stood, instinct with life and vigour, in the full possession of youth and strength—the perjurer—the man who had robbed the blind father of his only treasure—the man, of all others, whose presence, whose simplest word, was fraught with humiliation and torment to me.

My hand trembled — not with fear ; — one minute more, and my fate would be decided. I had nothing to leave — to lose — or to regret. I listened, in breathless expectancy, for the preconcerted signal. — We fired simultaneously — I reeled and fell, having received Percival's ball in my left arm ; but, rising again, contended for the prerogative of recommencing the deadly conflict. Our seconds strenuously interfered ; and, weak with the loss of blood, I reluctantly left the ground in silence.—Next day,

both Augustus and myself were expelled the university.

Heart-struck with this fresh mortification, I hastened as fast as the torture of my wound would permit, to Desmond Hall, where my kind father received me with open arms. A duel was what *he* was likely to approve; and, whatever people may say to the contrary, few parents could *wish* their child to submit passively to the insults of others. Duelling is a bad remedy for a worse disease. What would become of that complicated machine called society, 'if there was no check on the spiteful virulence, and gossiping detraction, of man to man? I am, however, advocating a bad cause; but those who would extirpate duelling, must suggest some other and more efficient mode of obtaining redress.

Far from attaching blame to my conduct, my father warmly applauded it; nor could I, on the strictest self-examination, consider myself particularly in fault. Perhaps I might have acted more prudently; yet the conscious rectitude of



my intentions supported me under the miserable conviction, that my future prospects in life, were in a great degree obscured, and all hopes of entering on a successful professional career, must now be abandoned, as expulsion from the university is like the stamp of reprobation.

For some time I was extremely wretched ; all energy forsook me, or expired for lack of excitement. The probability of being consigned to a life of idle insignificance was horrible ; I had no position in the social scale, and could obtain no rank even in the estimation of my friends, but through my own active and well-directed exertions. My cup of humiliation seemed filled up even to overflowing, and I was sinking into a state of low despondency, much increased by the anguish of my wound, when I received the following letter from Cleveland, to whom I had written on leaving Cambridge :—

“ *London, 1st March, 182—.*

“ You ought not to require comfort or consolation at my hands, my dearest Charles, however anxious I may be to offer both. I regret,

indeed, to find by your letter that you permit morbid and unjustifiable sensibility to gain the mastery over your cooler judgment.

“ I am no duellist, nor can I ever be induced to believe that *any* provocation, however goading, can for one moment excuse the wilful, wanton, risk of human life ; I am no advocate for such sanguinary customs, at best the relics of feudal barbarity, when the strongest arm was the vindication of the strongest right. Duelling, and the penalty of death, must ever be deemed a stain on civilized (and may I add, christianized) Europe ; but this is a subject on which we have differed so long, that I despair of ever converting you to a more philosophical, and more serious mode of thinking. I thank God, through whose infinite mercy you are spared the misery of remorse, your hands are unstained with the blood of a fellow-creature, whose guilt, however great, could not justify your raising a murderous arm against a life no power of yours could prolong for one instant. Your wound, although painful, is not dangerous, and I trust

you will soon cease to suffer material inconvenience from its effects. When you are sufficiently recovered to leave Desmond Hall, I shall expect to see you in town. We will live together — your presence will not interrupt my studies, but on the contrary, we shall be a mutual stimulus to each other's improvement. My father will be delighted to make your acquaintance, and is very capable of assisting your future plans, for without being officious, I think he may be of use ; at all events, you may depend on his best wishes.

“ I must, however, entreat you to subdue those bitter feelings which are of a nature to occasion your misery through life. Your first error was in childhood ; how often we have lamented that unfortunate rivalry with Augustus Percival ; it brought its own sad consequences and humiliations. As to the circumstance of your birth, to which you allude so pathetically, that is irremediable ; but seek rather, my dear friend, to raise yourself above the ‘ stings and arrows of outrageous fortune,’

than allow events over which you have no control, to crush the nobler aspirations of an elevated mind. As to the conduct of Mr. Percival, the most determined libertine could scarcely venture to palliate it ; I only regret that you were implicated in the business at all. My father hopes that the circumstances of the case will mitigate the consequences of your being expelled the university ; he will use all his interest in your behalf.

“ You must not give way to irritability. There are many passages in your letter, which were written, I trust, under the influence of disappointment, and that calmer views have long since superseded the gloomy anticipations therein expressed. Our greatest misfortunes, my dear Charles, are frequently very comparative ; we consider ourselves capable of judging the position of others, and repining over our own fate, without having previously ascertained if those whose lot appears (in our estimation) so very enviable, are really in the situation most congenial to their feelings and capacities. Envy

is a great drawback upon happiness, which is more imaginative than you believe. Similar to the landscape viewed by means of a prism, it takes its hue from the medium through which it is seen. To be happy, it is absolutely necessary to believe our destiny *that* which is most likely to contribute to our spiritual welfare. Content, is the first principle of worldly felicity. Limit your desires, my dear friend, to the sphere of gratification within your reach; let not your ideas outstep the bounds of reality, by exaggerating the relative good and evil which falls in your path.

“The circumstances of your birth were unfortunate, but you greatly aggravate that disadvantage, by a morbid, ill-judged sense of wrong and oppression, which has distorted your views of life. Could we look into every heart, what secret sorrows, passions, and affections we should then discover! what burning desires! what aspirings for greatness, glory, wealth, rank, possessions, and power! what hatred, envy, dissimulation, and spirit of persecution! Remember, also, that if an individual is raised above his fellow-men,

from that moment he is more surely exposed to reverse of fortune. Real happiness flourishes in the shade of mediocrity. Like the delicate plant whose fragile calix shrinks from the ardent glare of day, and unfolds its beauties sparkling with dew as the approaching night sheds its mysterious gloom.

“The happiest class of people are those who cultivate the land, sleep under a thatched roof, and congregate in remote villages, where the result of crops and agricultural experience, forms the first link of social distinction ; where humility takes the place of grandeur, simplicity of civilization, and virtue becomes the best of sciences. To conclude, I must give an extract from an ancient MS. now lying before me, which appears rather original; I shall transcribe it for your edification.

“ ‘ Happiness may be considered by many of its most unsuccessful votaries as the hitherto undiscovered philosopher’s stone. May it not rather be presumed that happiness remains oftener unappreciated, than undiscovered ? We are anxiously seeking it, grasping at the tem-

poral gratifications of an ephemeral existence, neglecting the precious gem that lies concealed in our own bosom.

“‘Happiness unobtrusively sheds its blessings, like the violet, diffusing its perfume around, unnoticed and unseen; ministering to the enjoyment of others rather than manifesting its own sweetness. The germs of felicity so wisely and bounteously implanted in every breast, wither merely for want of culture: we blindly court the treasure already possessed, and finding it not, turn to discontent. Thus, with a thousand undeserved blessings, we murmur over our lot. Such, indeed, is human nature; we are prone to think ourselves ill-used, and to despise the benefits we receive, forgetting that there are only two evils irremediable in the whole world, — death and sin.’

“I hope that you will lose no time in coming to London, being most desirous to introduce you amongst my friends, who will show you every attention in their power. Forgive my prolix epistle; some people are fond of talking,

I prefer writing, especially, being less liable to immediate contradiction. In the anxious expectation of seeing you,

Believe me, my dear Charles,

Ever devotedly yours,

EDMUND CLEVELAND."

This affectionate letter was a balm to my irritated mind. The calm philosophy it inculcated found a responsive echo in my breast; although I had not self-command enough to profit by the excellent advice so kindly offered. Lord Glenmore expressed his anxious desire that I should forthwith accept Cleveland's invitation to London. Although his own health was greatly impaired, and his spirits much depressed, he never failed to urge the manifold advantage to be derived from such an excellent introduction, with the serious benefit which might eventually accrue from the friendship and patronage of the Cleveland family. Still I deferred leaving him from day to day, and when he insisted that I should not delay my departure from



home, my heart sunk within me; for it was but too evident that my father was rapidly declining. His active mind recoiled on his memory, which only presented sad reminiscences of lost time, ill-regulated affections, talents misapplied, and irreparable errors. At length I acceded to his earnest wishes, and prepared to take my final leave of him. My wound was nearly healed, and nothing but my solicitude on his account detained me at Desmond Hall.

The evening previous to my journey was passed in Lord Glenmore's private chamber. He appeared composed in his demeanour; yet it was plainly to be perceived that he suffered greatly.

"You are now going to embark on the torrent of the great world," said he; "exactly thirty years ago, I first entered on a London life, and to what purpose? Where will it end? in the *grave*, Charles!!—the bourne to which we are all hastening!!! But this is a sad subject,—we will change it for a theme more suited to the occasion. I am anxious, most anxious, you should

form a good circle of acquaintance in the metropolis, and an inexperienced youth—(for such you must still permit me to consider you)—cannot be too careful of his first selections. A sincere friend is a jewel without price, and it is not an easy task to avoid the detrimental influence of a bad one. The worthless of all classes are constantly on the alert to intrude upon others; they have a thousand ways of rendering their society an agreeable acquisition; and the more engaging it proves, the more danger to be apprehended. Whereas those whose intimacy is of sufficient value to deserve cultivation, are proportionably retiring and difficult of access. For this reason I think that the introduction offered by Mr. Cleveland is far too important for me to allow its rejection; otherwise I should not be so desirous of sending you forth into the wilderness. I only pray that your passage through life may be less stormy than mine. One fatal error stamped my destiny in early years, and its morbid influence has already extended to yours.”

“ Let me implore you, my lord, not to revert

to those melancholy events long passed away ; it only tends to harass your feelings," said I, wishing to spare him all painful emotions.

"It is meet, child, that I should warn you from the shoals on which I was wrecked ; it is fit that I should in some measure unbosom myself to you, my son, and lay bare the bleeding ulcers of my heart. I was dissipated and extravagant, if you will ; but those faults might have been retrieved in the course of time and experience ; they only injured myself ; but a more serious crime involved the fate of others." He hid his face with his hands.

"If you allude to the misfortune of my birth, speak not of it," exclaimed I, interrupting him ; "let not that feeling of self-reproach to which you are now a victim embitter your solitary hours. I thank you, my lord, for the generous kindness you have shown, the friendship and affection which you have bestowed, and the education I owe to your fostering care ; but far be it from me to sting your parental heart with the upbraidings of discontent. I am grateful,

most grateful, for the notice you vouchsafe to me.”—These words were uttered with considerable agitation, to which the earl replied :

“ You are about to begin life, Charles ; and I find it is a duty incumbent on me to hold out the warning beacon. Temptation will assail you ; fashionable follies will entice you with all the specious varnish of elegance and refinement ; but as you value your life ! your honour !! your soul !!!—never, oh never, attach yourself to a married woman.—The more you love, the more necessary to guard against the seductions that are likely to ensnare your better principles. Dissipation, idleness, vanity, and above all, opportunity, will lead the way ; a thousand causes lend their aid, and a thousand extenuating circumstances will cast a veil over the frightful consequences to be anticipated from an illicit *liaison* with a WIFE ! ”—He paused from emotion, pressed my hand warmly in his, and continued : “ Remember, Charles, the contumely and degradation of your own origin. You know not all the misery entailed on those around, when deso-

lation and despair is brought by man into the peaceful household of another. Passion is evanescent ; we are inconstant beings, and cannot control the love of variety inherent to our nature. The strongest passion, unsupported by mutual respect and esteem, melts in the warm glow of fresh awakened desires ; and the woman who abandons her husband's home and her children's helpless infancy, may inspire pity, but not affection. — We will leave this subject now, Charles ; but it may be our fate never to meet again in this world ; for an inward monitor warns me of approaching dissolution, — nay, start not ! — I perhaps might linger, though I scarcely wish it, but for your sake. — Should I never see you more, remember my parting advice. Let me have the melancholy satisfaction of knowing that an existence of fifty years has not been utterly useless, if a father's wretched example can save you from a similar destiny."

These words sank deep in my mind, and as I looked anxiously at the care-worn figure of the earl, his altered appearance struck me so forcibly,

that I half determined not to leave Desmond Hall, and made an observation to that effect; but he was resolute.

“Do not neglect the opportunity which presents itself,” rejoined he. “By going to London you will improve your personal address, and acquire that ease of manner which can only be obtained by frequenting the higher circles. You will thereby cement your attachment to Edmund, and may also merit the esteem of his father, of whose character you must already be sufficiently apprised to appreciate its intrinsic worth. You profess a predilection for the bar. Mr. Cleveland has the power of pushing you forward, and may be induced to exert his patronage on your behalf, should your conduct deserve the flattering distinction.

“My will is made, Charles. I have not much to dispose of, as I dipped deeply into my personal property, long since; but the economy of the last two years has set things in good training; and I think I can leave you a clear 30,000*l.* incumbered with a small life-

annuity for your brother, whom I earnestly commend to your duty and affection."

I received the earl's parting injunction and paternal blessing on my bended knees. The night passed in sleepless agitation ; and I hailed the dim twilight of the approaching day with joy ; but on stepping into the chaise that conveyed me from my father's roof, tears of bitterness forced their way from my scorched eyelids ; and as I saw the grey walls of Desmond Hall gradually disappearing through the tender foliage that began to embellish the woodlands, I felt that I had taken a last farewell of home and of my father.

## CHAPTER V.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,  
 Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye  
 Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping  
 In sight, then lost amidst the forestry  
 Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping  
 On tiptoe through their sea-coal canopy;  
 A huge dun cupola like a fool's-cap crown  
 On a fool's head, and there is London town.

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

The tavern! park! assembly! mask! and play,—  
 Those dear destroyers of the tedious day;  
 That wheel of fops! that saunter of the town,  
 Call it diversion, and the pill goes down.

YOUNG, *Love of Fame*.

Quel bonheur de bondir eperdue en la foule,  
 De sentir par le bal ses sens multipliés,  
 Et de ne pas savoir si dans la nue on roule,  
 Si l'on chasse en fuyant la terre ou si l'on foule  
 un flot tournoyant sous ses pieds.

VICTOR HUGO.

I ARRIVED in town just after Easter. Cleveland's reception was all I could desire, and



soothed my irritated feelings by friendly attentions and affectionate demonstrations. He introduced me to his family, who seemed just what his family ought to be. The father was calm, dignified, and philosophical; the mother kind and christian-like; the sisters innocent and attached. They all seemed adapted to each other; like a fine picture, they blended in one perfect group.

In their society I passed my evenings and many of my mornings. Edmund undertook to show me town, which at first failed in exciting much interest; but like every other species of pastime, London soon amused my idle hours, so that I had not breathed that villanous compound of gas, smoke, and dust which forms the atmospheric air of the British metropolis for many weeks, ere I became as inveterate a loungeur as Regent-street, or even the Bond-street of other days ever boasted.

The first fortnight of my sojourn in the capital passed in seeing sights and being introduced, which, *par parenthese*, happens to be an odious

and awe-inspiring custom. This ceremonial is enough to chill one's mental energies for at least an hour. That loud exchange of proper names seems to rivet the attention so completely on the luckless individual thus designated for public animadversion, that a bashful man stands no chance of comfort, until the general run of people he is destined to encounter become acquainted, if not familiar, with his name.

I was soon set afloat amongst the ball-giving set. A young man, not very plain, nor very awkward, nor very unfashionable,—who can keep a cab, a groom, and a “tiger,”—who can enter a room without blundering, walk through a quadrille with military nonchalance, and turn a girl's head with the mazy intricacies of a waltz, gallopade, or the more “autocratic” mazurka, is pretty sure of being received with “open arms” by the fair sex at least, and with a considerable degree of indulgence and comparative cordiality by those persons who might happen to boast a more numerous female progeny than they find expedient to provide for.

Let me caution inexperienced beginners starting a season in London, previously to ascertain the exact number of daughters each matron is likely to produce before the admiring gaze of the assembled multitude, consisting of those already out, and those yet to appear. Nothing like being prepared for the danger to come. Should a man really feel inclined to dance (never a very advisable *move*), let him beware of encountering sisterhoods. Dancing may serve for an introduction, but it is in general a plan not to be pursued; as, with the best possible intentions, (if once he allows himself to be enlisted as a dancer,) the most indefatigable cavalier can never fathom the extent of misery he is thus entailing on himself. When a man is permanently calculated upon as a partner, he becomes public property: he loses all independence of action. The very faculties of the mind are regulated by the arduous task imposed by that social despot misnamed Politeness. All liberty of choice must be relinquished, and the blessings of free will are defied and annulled

by the fetters of courtesy; the very better qualities of the heart bind more strongly to the trammels of *bienseance*: he is a slave.....a slave to the very gratitude of an expansive nature. By dancing, he is compelled to display thankfulness for invitations received and invitations expected. At the same assembly he is obliged to show both memory and foresight,—to blend the recollection of the past, the pleasures of the present, and the hopes for the future. He becomes the *pis-aller* of beauties, the stop-gap of heiresses, the dowager's trump-card, the chaperon's double, the victim of the young, the speculation of the old, a peg for shawls, a flapper of fans, a plate-holder at supper, and seldom escapes acting footman when the confusion of the *fête* prevents the real attendants from answering the reiterated call vainly transmitted from mouth to mouth.

In the course of seasons a well-disposed youth, inclined to do that which is prompted by his amiability of disposition, loses caste with the more fashionable and daring of his associates;

the very excellences of his nature and general usefulness become detrimental to his respectability, and drawbacks on his individual happiness.

According to the different characters of different people, there are also different shades in the method of discharging the never-ending duties of the ball-room. The ambitious aspire to the jewel-encumbered hand of rank; the literary in self-defence seek to propitiate the formidable "blue." The *roué* smilingly selects the reigning belle; the fortune-hunter looks keenly after wealth; the *gourmand* courts the bilious offspring of colonial produce; the vain figure away under the patronage of fashion; the humble creep into notice by unobtrusive assiduity; the kind take pity on the neglected, and cheerfully sacrifice an evening's amusement on good-tempered insipidity and patient ugliness; whilst the hapless stranger, the uninitiated "neophyte of ton," wishing to make way with the majority, finds no termination to the voluminous catalogue of moral obligations devolving on him. The allegiance seems to extend from

generation to generation. He has to dance through whole families of dinner giving celebrities, comprising daughters, sisters, nieces, country cousins, and very particular friends,—to say nothing of young mammas and maiden aunts!—Commend me to the men who never dance!!!

Neither Edmund's mother nor sisters frequented what is termed fashionable society: they preferred a quiet serious circle of their own, chiefly composed of country families that came up for a couple of months during the session of parliament, and a few respectable dowager peeresses, where Mrs. Cleveland got her rubber, and the girls an occasional dance to the piano-forte, played alternately by the ladies themselves; and excepting on such occasions, a concert, or the German opera, they seldom left home. But Edmund was in high request, and presented me on the strength of his own popularity. Heir to a fine unincumbered property, belonging to a family of great local weight and influence, possessed of considerable personal advan-

tages, he was not only admitted, but sought by the most brilliant society in town, and even penetrated into the exclusive circle of diplomatic coterie. Though not particularly witty, or gifted with the *laissez aller* of high spirits, Cleveland's conversation was always agreeable; refined sense and excellent (though rather obsolete) principles were ever revealed in his gentlemanly and somewhat reserved language. Without being dazzling, he possessed the valuable advantage of being liked as soon as he was known. We had already appeared at various public places of amusement, and as many private parties of the most distinguished description. Multifarious were the pink, the blue, and yellow embossed notes, and gilt cards of invitation, which we received in return for the neat gothic lettered "~~Mr. Edmund Cleveland,~~" and the more delicate italian charactered "*Mr. Harcourt,*" which we had plentifully dispersed in the most promising neighbourhoods.

The season commenced most auspiciously, and Edmund entered one morning with so

pleased an expression, that I was almost at a loss to account for it, and imagined that the long hoped-for vouchers from the yet unrelenting lady patronesses of Almack's had at last arrived. The mystery was soon solved.

"Charles," said he, producing a *moirè* or *gaufred* (I am not quite clear as to the exact term) billet of pearly whiteness, "here is a note from Lady St. Elme, which will stamp your fashion forthwith. This appears to be a fancy-ball, and we shall certainly meet the very first company in London,—perhaps a rich heiress may fall in love with you, and so make your fortune at once; therefore let your costume be tolerably becoming."

"You cannot possibly think of my wearing a fancy dress, Edmund; I abominate the very idea," said I emphatically.

"But you *must*, Charles," retorted Cleveland. "Having no uniform, I dislike a fancy dress equally, and actually pine for a new era in the ball-going world: there is something so derogatory to one's masculine dignity in being tricked



out like a merry-andrew. But I have received intimation that her ladyship's injunctions are imperative. Remember," added he, archly, "she is a leader of ton, a patroness at Almack's. Pass the Rubicon, and doff this 'suit of solemn black.' "

"What am I to wear? in the name of all that is becoming, tell me," inquired I.

"Do you wish," answered Cleveland, "to be informed of the negatives,—what you are *not* to wear? — To begin; never conceal a handsome forehead with a heavy ill-contrived turban; or a pair of handsome legs with slovenly Turkish trousers; beware also of Spanish dresses, lest the high ruff *de rigueur* proves too stiff for a short neck, giving an agreeable impression that the wearer is labouring under the effects of a severe cold and sore throat. Few would wish to look fierce enough for the personification of bandit or brigand. Jews, Turks, and infidels are common-place: as you value your reputation, refrain from every attempt at the character of a hero! — of all errors that is most fatal to a *succès de costume*; it is a certain failure; for

who can rival the idealization of a hero?—even actors, who have the advantage of light and distance, with the most flattering accessories of scenery and gesticulation, how few of the most talented amongst them can ever fulfil one's ideas of what a hero *ought* to be? Kean is unrivalled as Richard; but I doubt if any of the ladies would be very anxious to become the Juliet of such a Romeo; and I consider Pasta in the same attire decidedly the handsomest fellow of the two. I rather think it is preferable to dress an historical personage, where at least we have the aid of paintings, medals, statues, and basso-relievos, than to pretend embodying the classic creations of romance.”

“Edmund!” interrupted I impatiently, “you quite destroy my self-esteem, which till now has been on the increase. I was thinking of Coriolanus;—fine flowing drapery, you know.”

“And are you prepared to stand all the evening in a preconcerted attitude looking like John Kemble, or with one arm extended like a sign-post, as Talma did in Duci's laboured transla-

tion of the immortal Shakspeare? If you drink, if you eat, if you attend the supper-table, if you venture to lounge, or presume to talk nonsense, you are lost, lost beyond all redemption."

"This is quite intolerable," cried I; "you talk of historical associations, and yet contrive to throw ridicule on the great Roman renegado. Well, I give him up, as he gave up his country. Suppose I try 'Henri Quatre?'"

"And wear a plume of ostrich feathers in a velvet hat!" replied my companion: "a pretty woman could scarcely wear such an unbecoming addition to her toilet: besides, you are too tall already, and never could carry off such a lengthy appendage with effect. Henri Quatre should be rather verging on the middle age, with sufficient *embonpoint*. I doubt if you would approve of that requisite," added my friend by way of consolation to my ruffled vanity.

"Let us look over Scott and Byron," observed I, drawing the scattered volumes towards me.

"Discard, I pray you, all notion of such an attempt," interrupted Cleveland, pushing the

books aside; "you are not fit for Lara, or Selim, Conrad or Juan, — too young for some, and too good for others. — As thou lovest me, venture not in the hackneyed garb of *Ivanhoe*, the *Templar*, or *Roderick D'hu*; else you will be pestered with *Rebeccas*, *Ellens*, *Gulnares* and *Medoras*! By all means select some character divested of a female *pendant*. A friend of mine personated *Leicester*, and his whole comfort was destroyed by an odious *Amy Robsart* badly dressed, hanging on his arm. Nobody understands grouping in this country."

"Well then, *Edward the Black Prince* may suit your fancy: he never married, nor has he ever been accused of any little peccadilloes."

"You will look like the front window of an undertaker's shop, stalking forth studded with silver nails, shining like a coffin-plate in splendid solemnity. That will never do," returned my fastidious friend.

"The statue of the *Commendatore*, in *Don Giovanni*," continued I, smiling at the strange catalogue.

"Yes, but the eloquent transparency of the complexion must be veiled in white paint. The dusty miller would be preferable; but nobody likes to make a clown of themselves."

"My dear fellow," exclaimed I, out of all patience, "these negatives are excellently amusing in their way, but do not settle the point in question."

"The great secret of human life consists in negatives: it is not that which we shall do, but that which we shall *not* do, that is prescribed in the decalogue. All would be right if people would but refrain from doing wrong. Now I only wish to prevent your making yourself ridiculous, as almost every man does when he begins to dress in a fancy costume."

"You cannot complain of indocility on my part," interrupted I; "for the last five minutes, I have been engaged balancing the respective merits of Italian, Highland, Switz, and Tryolese garbs; but although I have no particular reason to be ashamed of my limbs, I can neither resolve on displaying my bare calves, nor on

concealing them with worsted hose or heavy boots."

"Well done vanity!" exclaimed Cleveland.

"Nor can I contemplate the possibility of encumbering myself with any species of armour," added I.

"So much the better," observed my companion; "for it cannot in the least prove conducive to the graceful ease of your movements."

"I believe we must give it up as a hopeless case," replied I, almost in despair; "for how shall I ever summon courage to appear like a mountebank before such an elegant assemblage?"

"Who will," interrupted Edmund with considerable vivacity, "be far more ridiculous themselves; indeed half the people who frequent fancy-balls seem to study the preposterous, from which imputation I cannot exonerate even the fair. Like the Spectator's mountain of human miseries, each seems intent on exchanging the natural characteristic for *one* night. — At last," continued he, after a pause, "you may give me credit for a share of ingenuity! I

have hit on something that will suit admirably. You often praised the picture by Vandyck in our dining parlour. My father says it is Charles the First in the commencement of his reign. What say you to that costume?"

"Ye—es! that might do... not very foolish... but melancholy, and dignified; yet not ridiculous, nothing tawdry or vulgar, no glaring tinsel, or tasteless finery,—a black velvet pourpoint, black silk hose slashed with black satin gold ornaments."

"And my mother," interrupted Edmund, "will lend you a diamond star, and my sisters must supply a rich point lace collar, open to display a throat which ought to be rather handsome. I hope yours is tolerable, Charles."

"I flatter myself," answered I, affectedly inserting my forefinger and thumb between the interstice of my chin and well-disposed cravat. The result of this *delicate* investigation was equally satisfactory to us both; and after a little more self-examination, the dress was agreed on. Cleveland, luckily for himself, was deputy

lieutenant for the county of Devon, and sported that uniform much to his own satisfaction, as I doubt his ever being able to select any attire consistent with his peculiar ideas.

The night came; we entered the shrine of fashion, just as the splendid apartments were being filled almost to what, in theatrical language, would be called overflow. An elegant taste had evidently presided over the decoration and lighting of the rooms; the latter most necessary addition to a fête is an art itself. There was as much difference between the well directed system of the argand lamps that irradiated the saloon at Lady St. Elme's, and the glaring blaze that dazzled without illuminating at other parties, as there is between the matchless brilliants of the Marchioness of L—y and the vile Brazilian stones of Mrs. —.

We had scarcely sauntered through the rooms, recognizing acquaintance and commenting on the animated scene, when my gaze, and with it my admiration, was attracted by a most lovely woman actually resplendent with her own bril-



lancy. Her well chosen robe harmonized completely with the redundancy of her beauty: her dark silken hair was nearly radiant with the lustre of a profusion of diamonds, which were placed with the discrimination of a painter and the expertness of an *artiste en cheveux*. The pure outline of a faultless bust was totally unincumbered with any ornament except a few stray ringlets that playfully intertwined on her ivory bosom; a fan-shaped ruff shaded the back of her neck, and gradually diminished as it approached the shoulders; a full and graceful train of silver tissue terminated a figure which had, perhaps, too much *abandon* for fashionable perfection; a finely rounded arm peeped from a rich fall of "blonde," and a beautiful though rather singular bracelet encircled her wrist, — it was of considerable value, but the fashion had long since become obsolete.

"Who is that?" was the spontaneous inquiry.—"Our fair hostess, the Viscountess St. Elme," replied Cleveland; "you must be introduced directly." I followed him towards the

presiding divinity. The usual forms of etiquette gone through, I again raised my eyes, and met the full, dark, liquid orbs of the lovely viscountess. A thrilling sensation made my heart beat with emotion, — a sort of reminiscence, — a faint dreamy remembrance brought the fine features of Lady St. Elme as familiar to my recollection. She seemed the realization of an ideal form, as if the glowing imaginings of my adolescence were brought tangibly before me. The bracelet, however, was not the creation of fancy. I thought I could remember every link, and with a single touch, have loosed the secret spring which bound its glittering circles on her arm.

She spoke: there is something captivating in a sweet voice, something beyond mere physical perfection. Lady St. Elme's voice blended softness with deep feeling. The simplest word she uttered conveyed a sentiment and meaning she probably did not venture to express: even in the uninteresting twaddle of ball-room common-place, she gave a colouring and tone to themes that had already been exhausted by half London.

I staid by her, talking, or rather listening to her charming conversation, for a considerable part of the evening; watching with delight the transitions of her varying countenance; but there was a feverishness of motion, a wandering restlessness in her inquiring glance, that betokened a mind ill at ease: her smile beamed radiance, but was not gladdening; her look was one of love, but not of happiness. We got through the numberless hackneyed phrases of the day, and skimmed lightly from Almack's to the opera—Howel and James's to the park—from Cheltenham to Brighton; when I perceived that the attention of my charming hostess was divided, not by her guests, but by the teeming activity of her own mind.

During this sparkling display of elegance and fashion, where was Lord St. Elme? This question was easier asked than answered.—Although his lordship sometimes appeared in the course of his wife's *soirées*, it was still too early to expect his *entré*, being probably detained at the opera, where it was rumoured he

patronized a favourite *danseuse* ; or, having dropped in at Cr—f—d's, where it is presumed he dispensed a large portion of his ready cash : others, again, asserted that his affections (I beg his lordship's pardon, attentions, I mean,) were absorbed by the dashing Mrs. Bellenden. . . All these reports might be more or less founded on fact ; for when the noble lord did make his tardy appearance, it was to show the most indubitable admiration and devotion to the latter person.

I thought I surprised a pensive shade on the bright brow of Lady St. Elme, who uttered a half suppressed sigh as he negligently strolled past with the object of his evident adoration, hanging fondly on his arm. I saw the wife, all brilliant as she appeared, was not happy ; and soon discovered that the viscount was not only a fashionable, but an indifferent husband. — Still she smiled on ; the night passed off with eclat ; she was flattered, amused, and envied ; the reeking pages of " The Morning Post," teemed with an exuberant description of the fête given by the fascinating Lady

St. Elme; the lavish profusion of the supper tables, the exquisite taste that pervaded the entertainment, formed the leading topic for many hours.

From this party I might date my permanent *debut* in the great world. Night after night I wandered forth in quest of novelty, and frequently had opportunities of meeting the viscountess in the numerous circles into which I had the honour of being presented, and of whom she was the soul.

In the course of time I was informed that the St. Elmes had married for love about two years previously. He was a handsome, gay, wild young man, of a weak and unsteady nature, easily led, and still more easily practised upon by artful and designing people. He soon found that the charms of his interesting wife were insufficient to rivet his vacillating affections, and it was now but too apparent that she held but a subordinate place in a heart only anxious for variety.

Lord St. Elme was fond of dissipation; the turf and gaming table alternately attracted his wayward attention; although as yet he had not plunged deeper than the usual fashionable ex-

cesses, he nevertheless had contrived to make his young wife perfectly unhappy.

I had already visited them for a considerable time, ere I discovered the intense interest with which this amiable woman inspired me. I beheld her in the privacy of her home, in the quiet routine of her family circle; then indeed I could in some degree appreciate the charming qualities that distinguished her, and lament the sorrows and temptations to which she was likely to be exposed.

The envied and admired votary of fashion was a miserable being, and struggled with an aching agonized mind under the captivating smiles of grace and beauty. Wretched and forlorn at her own fire-side, which was seldom cheered by the presence of her husband, she fled to the intoxication of society for relief, and forgot her actual loneliness in the gay crowds that fluttered round her. Vanity was here awakened; adulated, envied and imitated, Lady St. Elme found solace in the pleasures of the world she was formed to embellish, where

her elegance, accomplishments, rank, and lavish expenditure obtained universal applause.

Her parties were generally esteemed the most brilliant, her circle most *choisi* and her *ton* most *distingué*; whilst the dinners of her husband obtained equal celebrity, for a French *artiste* presided over the culinary department, and the wines were unexceptionable.

Her ladyship's concerts had decided vogue, as they usually produced a constellation of talent; for her, Pasta and Veluti forgot their enmity, and united their heavenly accents in "Theobaldo ed Isolina." Sontag rivalled, with Paganini, in executing the varied intricacies of the chromatic scale under every combination of harmony; whilst Donzelli with matchless intonation swelled his full and melting tenor in opposition to the delicate *Fioritura* of the *Principe della cadenza*.

The viscountess herself sung most delightfully; her voice was of exquisite purity, and a fine mezzo soprano, that reminded the entranced hearer of the soft love-inspiring tones of

the voluptuous Grassini, or the more modern, though not less charming Ronzis de Begnis. Her taste and musical expression were faultless. She preferred Mozart to Meyerbeer, Mercadante to Pacini, Rossini to Auber, and gave a decided supremacy to Beethoven and Weber. I never could hear her sing *Sè il m'abandoni* without a thrill of melancholy delight, and the unbidden tears gushing into my eyes, accompanied with painful conjectures as to the ultimate fate of one so gifted, whose better nature, noble qualifications, and fine abilities were merged in the whirling vanity and corruption of fashionable existence.

I had now been some time in London, and with the advice of Mr. Cleveland, senior, chose the law, as a profession most congenial to my habits and taste. He kindly assisted my endeavours, and I took chambers in the Temple, by his sanction, and recommendation.

Edmund's being heir to his father's noble estate in Devonshire, precluded the necessity of his entering on a profession ; indeed, if he had



any particular bias, it was in favour of the church; yet he often observed, that he considered it the bounden duty of every English gentleman to acquaint himself with the laws of the land from which he derived protection and support. So he continued sharing my studies occasionally.

Augustus Percival was not in town. I was, therefore, relieved from the torture his presence always inflicted; but the circle which I frequented was too extensive, and the individuals who composed it were too well bred to question or canvass the subject of my birth and origin. My being the friend and companion of Mr. Cleveland was sufficient recommendation, and my own conduct did not reflect discredit on my excellent introduction.

## CHAPTER VI.

La fleur qui s'ouvrit avec l'Aurore en pleurs  
 Et qui fait à midi de ses belles couleurs  
 Admirer la splendeur timide  
 Sous ses carrolles d'or loin des yeux importuns,  
 Au fond de ce calice où sont tous ses parfums  
 Souvent cache une perle humide.

VICTOR HUGO.

Oh ! it is sickness to the heart,  
 To bear in revelry its part,  
 And yet feel bursting — not one thing  
 Which has part in its suffering ;  
 The laugh as glad, the step as light,  
 As if the laugh, step, glance, and song,  
 Did to young happiness belong.

L. E. L.

Oh ! pourquoi te cacher ? tu pleurois seule ici ;  
 Devant tes yeux rêveurs qui donc passoit ainsi ?  
 Qu'elle ombre flottoit dans ton ame ?  
 Etoit-ce long regret ou noir presentiment,  
 Ou jeunes souvenirs dans le passé dormant,  
 Ou vague faiblesse de femme ?

VICTOR HUGO.

THE season was now nearly over, and as the month of July drew towards its close, I began to discover that my visits at the Viscountess St.

Elme's were more frequent than prudence could possibly justify. I found that the hour of seeing her was anticipated with feverish impatience,—my thoughts were constantly engrossed by her image, and I counted the intervals of absence from —— Square, with a degree of anxiety which with difficulty could be satisfactorily explained. I was living, as it were, from day to day,—one object alone influenced my actions. I hailed the moment of meeting Lady St. Elme ; and on separating from her, concentrated my hopes and expectations on the morrow, which would “bring back the blest hour of meeting again.”

But it was a considerable time ere the conviction of my passion flashed across my mind ; the idea was too remote to excite a moment's suspicion. I admired, then I pitied, the brilliant Anastasia, whilst her husband inspired me with mixed feelings of anger and contempt ; but had his conduct been different, I should have felt perhaps jealous of his happiness. My father's words sometimes recurred to me,—the recollection

brought with it a sensation of painful doubt, and I chased the injurious thought from my breast, under the impression that the viscountess was too good, too pure. The supposition of such a possibility was a profanation: she still retained a lingering fondness for her husband, ill as he deserved it, and my transient fears were lulled with the delusive belief in the security of Anastasia's love for St. Elme; but the danger, though concealed, was not less imminent, particularly as Lord St. Elme gave himself up by degrees to the most licentious excesses; his affair with the opera-dancer being no longer a secret, and Mrs. Bellenden having been cut in consequence of an awkward *exposé*.

The viscount's frequent and prolonged absences did not check the constancy of my visits, or prevent the assiduity of my attention to his lovely wife, who was whirling in the vortex of dissipation from which at times I hoped to snatch her. Various and contradictory were the feelings she excited, and I did not know that I really loved her with all the ardour

of which I was susceptible, until the fatal passion was too deeply rooted to be easily overcome.

Anastasia seldom spoke of her husband, and when she did, it was with affected indifference. Her heart had been disappointed, and she still endeavoured to keep the unholy secret, preferring the outward triumphs of vanity to the cruel kindness of commiseration. The world witnessing the neglect she endured, and the apparent stoicism she opposed to conduct that certainly would have crushed many a less sensitive being, might perhaps accuse her of levity; but I was too much flattered by the partiality she evinced for my society, to think otherwise than favourably of the woman I loved with an all-admiring affection.

I was her constant attendant, and when I did not precisely accompany her, I usually contrived to meet Lady St. Elme, either at private parties, or at some place of public resort. My appearance no longer required apology or explanation, feeling not only that I was welcome, but that I was expected. The gentle reproach, the impatient

greeting, the searching glance, and mysterious whisper, had encouraged me, and bade me proceed in the career of destruction.

We had already arrived at the dangerous point of intimacy, when open attentions begin to relax, and interviews of a more confidential nature supersede the mere flirtation. We ceased to flirt, we talked less, smiled less; I no longer ventured to waltz with her; my hand trembled if I led her to a seat; yet I had no plan, no design, nor had she. We both were hurried forward by . . . events.

We exchanged books; my library was copious and well chosen, whilst her ladyship possessed all the most desirable modern authors in their respective languages. Perhaps there is nothing more seductive to a young and fervent imagination, than the communication and mutual participation of ideas resulting from the perusal of each other's favourite works; it is like reading the inmost recesses of the heart, — it is penetrating the hallowed sanctuary of feeling which every delicate mind endeavours to veil even from the observation of friendship.

Intellectual chastity is violated, the thoughts and impressions of the soul are discovered, not even as they actually exist in the wild succession and undefined waywardness of fancy, but clothed and adorned in the witchery of poetry, brought tangibly to the understanding by the power of genius ; it is not that which is expressed, but that which is implied. To crown all, Lady St. Elme was not satisfied with books alone, but constantly requested me to read aloud the most effective passages, and my voice grew tremulous with emotion as I frequently gave utterance to the accents of my own boundless passion. Sometimes I believed that she could not misunderstand me, and conscious of my own aspirings, I shrank abashed from the languid glance that captivated mine.

A circumstance occurred, which at length revealed the intensity of a love I no longer sought to analyse or control. I was engaged to dine in —— Square ; the hour was seven, and no other company was expected. Punctual to the appointment, I entered the drawing-room,

and found her ladyship alone; we waited a considerable time for St. Elme, whose protracted stay was of too frequent recurrence to excite particular uneasiness. At last we were compelled to sit down *tête-à-tête*, still expecting that he would arrive in time to break the extreme awkwardness of our situation. The viscountess ate but little; her eyes constantly wandering towards the door. She evinced all the restlessness of combined anxiety and latent hope. She seemed agitated with unusual excitement, and the disjointed sentences with which she answered my casual observations betrayed but too clearly the tumultuous feelings within.

The repast which appeared intolerably long, terminated in silence to our great relief. The ceremonial of the table was a torture, the presence of the servants an obstacle, even to our faint efforts at keeping up a desultory conversation. But the few short phrases I had endeavoured to articulate, had ceased to elicit even a vague reply, and I abandoned the fruitless attempt in despair.



As soon as the dessert was placed, Lady St. Elme withdrew to her boudoir, thither I followed, unasked but not unwelcome. She was pale as marble, and her face bore the trace of fast-falling tears. I witnessed the fierce contention between pride and sentiment in speechless anguish ; for I tenderly pitied the beautiful creature who appeared before me, as she really was, the broken-hearted, ill-used wife of a *roué*.

Daughters of virtue ! ye who rise superior to the follies by which ye are surrounded, and condemn the erring sisters of humanity less fortunate, less happy than yourselves,—have ye never felt the smart of disappointment ? Have ye never endured the sting of neglect, or slowly imbibed the deadly venom of jealousy ? Have ye never been tried, when the balm of flattery, the intoxication of vanity, and the opiate of seduction, were at hand, to blunt the keen-edge of remorse, and rescue the sinking soul from despair, steeping the ulcerated feelings in the fond delusion of newly-awakened passion ?

An innate sentiment of delicacy forbade me

remaining to witness the misery and hopeless agony of the weeping Anastasia. Yet I stood rivetted to the spot, spell-bound, fascinated, unable to exercise any faculty beyond that of love. A woman may be dear in the day of gladness at the foot of the altar, in the triumph of beauty, in the hour of conquest; but is never half so irresistible as in the utter helplessness of despondency. It is then she clings fondly to sympathy, and yields her whole heart in return for that which she receives.

I was yet irresolute. I knew my presence was not required. Still she had not dismissed me. At that moment, a note was brought. The eloquent blood rushed into Anastasia's transparent cheek. "Excuse me," said she, opening the missive; "this is from Lord St. Elme."

"Un-ex-pect-ed-ly de-tained at the House," murmured the viscountess, examining the superfine gilt-edged paper, on which he had traced a few lines of apology. A fragrant odour of sandalwood proclaimed it to have been the evident contents of a lady's desk; and, if a doubt remained,

it was dispelled by the seal, which bore the neat impression of Mrs. Bellenden's widow's lozenge.

Lady St. Elme steadfastly gazed at the letter for a few moments: her eyes flashed indignation, which was instantly quenched in a flood of tears. "Oh, Mr. Harcourt!" said she, sobbing aloud, "I ought to be ashamed at your witnessing these uncontrolled feelings; but I cannot help this weakness—indeed, I cannot help it," faintly articulated the viscountess in the intervals of weeping—"day after day, night after night, he leaves me for the society of a ——. Forgive me; but to be abandoned thus, whilst my husband revels in luxurious depravity—Oh God! support me," added she, pressing her throbbing breast, as if to still its bounding.

"Lady St. Elme! — Anastasia!! — dear friend!!!" exclaimed I, seizing the hand that fell powerless on the back of her chair—

"Friend!" echoed she mournfully; "I have no friend. St. Elme loves Mrs. Bellenden, and leaves me here to the pity of strangers."

“Not so, not to strangers, dearest Anastasia,” cried I, fondly pressing the soft white palm, which trembled in my grasp.

“Strangers! yes, strangers, Mr. Harcourt,” returned the viscountess; “I have neither friends nor kindred. I was left an orphan in early life. I recollect no mother’s fostering care; and my father died whilst I was yet a child: alone, without link or tie, my whole affections concentrated on Lord St. Elme. I clung fondly to his love, hoping that his attachment would compensate for all besides; and now *he* casts me off. I am wretched, indeed! I have no mother to console me, or advise my youth and inexperience; no brother to protect my weakness; and now, indeed, no husband to cherish my confiding fondness!”

“Consider me your friend, your devoted friend,” said I, interrupting her, with warmth. “Confide in me, dearest Lady St. Elme; you may command my affection and my obedience.”

“No, no,” exclaimed her ladyship, “tempt me not to reveal the sanctuary of this bursting

heart. I will seek oblivion in a crowd. Let me talk, smile, and please a wondering multitude, who will exult in the *charming elasticity of Lady St. Ebne's delightful spirits!* — Harcourt," continued Anastasia, with considerable energy and animation, "the world is an opiate; it lulls the carking cares of domestic disunion. I have drunk madly, deeply, of the intoxicating draught; but the time must come when I shall awaken from the entrancing illusions of vanity. Should I ever be visited with sickness, age, and infirmity,—then, Charles, you may pity me, prostrate on the bed of anguish, in solitude, and suffering. The bitter feelings which corrode my inward heart will burst forth in fierce and unchecked freedom, when the main-spring which binds the whole is loosened by bodily disease. Till then, Charles, I am (at least in the estimation of the world) a lively, reckless—and, perhaps, a happy woman. Could I but once regain some portion of my husband's love, I feel that all would not be lost."

"Why do you speak thus to one, who is

only too anxious to obtain a share of your affection, and would give worlds to excite the slightest interest in a heart, which seems bent on sacrificing itself to..."

The viscountess, suffused with crimson, interrupted me by ringing the bell violently, saying, with perfect composure, "This is my night for the Opera; we shall have Malibran in Desdemona.—Pray, order the carriage directly."

I was completely silenced, and felt that the purity of Lady St. Elme's intentions did not warrant farther advances. I was not a libertine—nor had I the most distant views of seduction. Such an accusation would have been abhorrent to my feelings; yet from that hour I knew that I loved Anastasia, and did not despair of meeting a return.

Lady St. Elme had retired to arrange her head-dress, and re-entered the room, with an appearance that strangely contrasted with the scene I had just witnessed—the slightest possible contraction of her arched brow alone indicated the storm within, and the most delicate

tinge of rouge was only perceptible to the eye that had observed her previous paleness. I looked in vain for some outward token of feeling; but the outraged, weeping, interesting viscountess was now the elegant patroness of Almack's, intent on fashionable excellency, whom I was to escort to her box at the Opera.

The performance had already commenced some time when we entered; but even the finished style of Pasta's singing, and her forcibly pathetic acting, was lost on us both: for her ladyship was, with apparent indifference, watching for the probable arrival of the Viscount and Mrs. Bellenden, and fixed her opera-glass with pertinacity far above the aristocratic sphere of the dress-circle; whilst I fruitlessly endeavoured to analyze the intensity of my own admiration; but the mysterious, soul-harrowing harmony of the last act in Rossini's *chef-d'œuvre*, found at length the accustomed tribute of applause, as Malibran poured forth the rich tones of her powerful *contra alto* in the sweet ballad, accompanied by

the harp: every ear was strained to catch the lingering sounds that melted on the sense; but when the deliciously touching *morceau*, "*Det calma o' ciel*," breathed its unrivalled pathos on the enchanted audience, I saw the hitherto bright eyes of the viscountess were suffused in tears. The chord of feeling was struck.

Before the curtain rose for the ballet, my attention was attracted by the appearance of Augustus Percival in an upper box, although he sought to avoid observation. I instantly recognised him; he was accompanied by one whose pretty features I could scarcely mistake, although an elaborate style of dress much diminished the effect of a naïve physiognomy. It was Mary Smith decked, in the trappings of shame. The visible change wrought in her external deportment was trifling, when compared to the gigantic strides with which her mind had evidently wandered from the paths of virtue; wreathed in smiles, (bitter, mocking, blasting smiles, that betrayed the heart she sought to cheer,) she looked triumphant around her, conscious of her



beauty, conscious of its momentary supremacy. She lived but for the hour, heedless alike of the past, and of the future, like the frail insect that flutters in giddy circles round the searching rays destined to destroy its ephemeral existence; so Mary appeared to court the degradation into which she was rapidly sinking.

I sighed with sorrow at thus beholding the beautiful girl once known to be innocent and happy, in a situation which appeared more than equivocal; but vanity, that moral pestilence, had breathed its dread infection. To gratify that hateful passion, Mary had forgotten the humble duties of her station, and had brought her blind father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. I looked involuntarily at my companion, and drew a parallel between the lady and the peasant. Different in rank, in education, and in mind, the two were fast hastening to the same goal of destruction; the commission of a first fault brings half way towards committing a second. Mary had already outstepped the boundaries, whilst the viscountess was yet hesitating at the

fragile barrier which indicates the gradation from levity to error.

As I meditated on the gay assemblage before me, I could not help remarking the number of beautiful females whose exterior was at least of a dubious character. In after years, I have thought equally that London possesses more handsome women of an unfortunate description than any other capital in the world: and it is difficult to assign a cause, in a country where religion and morality are so strenuously attended to, unless it is that the middling class of females are so little encouraged in laudable and virtuous industry.

Shops seldom employ women; all the fashionable works and elegancies of feminine handicraft, are either brought from France, or rudely imitated by steam-impelled machinery. The *brodeuse* and *tricotteuse* of the continent are unknown to our more mechanical metropolis; even the manufactory of straw-bonnets is superseded by the more classical Leghorn. We patronize French milliners, French dress-makers,

French dancers, French singers, French cooks; French maids, and French governesses; these may all be perfectly efficient and accomplished, but why? — why cannot English do equally well? To which it may be answered, want of encouragement. A decent girl in this country has some difficulty in getting established in a lucrative line of business; while seduction is ever ready to tempt them from struggling in the paths of ill-rewarded labour, to the luxurious idleness of sin and shame. However, this reasoning could not apply to Mary Smith; but, alas! it does to many others; and I would fain persuade my fair country-women of the moral obligation incumbent on them to support the cause of national female industry.

The unexpected sight of Augustus Percival had awakened a train of bitter reflections, and I was glad when the fall of the curtain concealed the last graceful pirouettes of “la Divine Taglioni.” Lady St. Elme was evidently fatigued, body and mind. I hurried through the crush-room, and handed her to the carriage. I lingered a

moment, hoping she would request me to accompany her home; but the footman closed the door. "Good night!" was tremulously exchanged as the vehicle drove off, leaving me alone under the arcade, from whence I strolled leisurely to my lodgings, revolving the events of the day.

The next morning, I received a note from Lady St. Elme; it was the first she had ever written to me, and contained the following words, evidently traced under great agitation of mind.

"We have met too often—you have witnessed that which it was my duty to conceal—you have unintentionally beheld the misery of my wedded life. The secret thus confided to your honour, must remain buried for ever; but another trial awaits me. I must fly from the dangerous consolation your pity might afford. A wife should screen a husband's faults, and I have betrayed the errors of mine. Harcourt, do not cease to esteem the intentions of my heart, because you have discovered all its weakness.

“ Farewell, you who have shared my leisure hours,—you, who have soothed the bitterness of regret, accept my friendship, and grant me yours. The recollection of the past will cheer the gloomy future, for I shall see you no more.

“ Ask not, seek not, for an interview, until . . . . . until happiness is restored to me, or I have learned to bear its loss.

“ *B—— Square, July, 182 —.*”

A tear had fallen on the paper, which was blotted, and almost illegible. I pressed it fondly to my lips, and flew to the house which contained the treasure of my soul; but she had left town, and the servants were not apprised of her destination.

The anguish I endured on this occasion, betrayed the fearful extent of my attachment; and weeks elapsed ere I could resume with success my usual pursuits and occupations. I gave myself up to unremitting study, which gradually produced the desired effect, and contributed greatly towards abstracting my thoughts from the wild and uncontrollable pas-

sion which had hitherto totally engrossed them. The season had concluded with more than usual gaiety; the Clevelands had long since started for Brighton, and I was alone in the vast metropolis, if I can be allowed to use such an expression; but my solitude was grateful to my feelings; it was far, far preferable to the jarring bustle of a world that had ceased to interest me. Consigned to my lodgings in the Temple, I passed the ensuing autumn in an uninterrupted course of serious reading, and it was near the month of November when I received a letter from the old butler at Desmond Hall. My father, he said, was ill, *very* ill, and expressed a wish to see me once more. The case was urgent, and I started the day after this information reached me, with very faint hopes of meeting the Earl of Glenmore alive.

## CHAPTER VII.

“Maintenant tout dormoit sur sa bouche glacée,  
 Le souffle se taisoit dans son sein endormi,  
 Et sur l'œil sans regard la paupière affaissée  
 Retomboit à demi.

“Et moi debout, saisi d'une terreur secrète  
 Je n'osois m'approcher de ce reste adoré,  
 Comme si du trépas la majesté muette  
 L'eut déjà consacré.”

DE LA MARTINE.

“Tis morn—and o'er his altered features play  
 The beams—without the hope of yesterday :  
 What shall he be ere night ? Perchance a thing  
 O'er which the raven flaps his funeral wing,  
 By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt ;  
 While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,  
 Chill—wet—and misty, round each stiffened limb,  
 Refreshing earth, reviving all but him.”

LORD BYRON, *Corsair*.

My journey was dreary enough, and in spite of all my exertions, I could not reach Desmond Hall as soon as I wished. It was getting dark, a soaking rain had been falling for many hours,

and the trees, stript of verdure, were distilling drop by drop the superabundant moisture they had absorbed. The low moaning wind swept mournfully through the branches, rustling a few faded brown leaves that yet lingered after departed summer. The air was damp, and the clouded atmosphere gave no hope of change. It was such an evening as would render even a happy man thoughtful, if not sad. On entering the avenue leading to Desmond Hall, I looked anxiously to see if any lights proclaimed a change in my father's state; but through the long melancholy approach I could only discern a glimmering taper in the room inhabited by the invalid. As I drew up to the front-door, no bustling servants or noisy dogs bounded forth to welcome the stranger; all was dark, silent, and forlorn: the old butler answered a reiterated summons, and cautiously shaded the candle with his hand as the autumnal blast rushed through the opening door.

“Dear Mr. Charles, is it you? God be praised!” cried the old man, with kindly greet-



ings; "walk softly, sir; his lordship still hears very acutely."

"He is, then, alive?" cried I, hurrying forward to the scene of desolation. I found the Earl speechless, evidently in great agony both of mind and body. My young brother was kneeling by the bed-side, sobbing aloud, and holding a nerveless hand, whose paralyzed grasp no longer returned the fervent pressure. My poor father was extended on the couch, supported by cushions: his fine head thrown back, the flickering light of the taper just irradiated his pale features. A glance of recognition proved that he was aware of my entrance: there was a touching earnestness and solicitude in his look, that penetrated my heart.

"The pulse is very languid; raise the patient gently," cried the village apothecary, who stood by rather as a matter of form than from any reliance placed in his professional skill. My father was certainly past all human aid, and I looked in vain for a spiritual comforter. I merely descried a small prayer-book, which had

once been my mother's, peeping from amongst the bed-clothes: there was no other token of serious preparation.

"The scene is fast closing, sir," continued the man of phials, in a tone meant, I believe, for condolence.

I turned from his officiousness with insurmountable disgust: he was accustomed to witness death, and had become callous to the spectacle that was daily taking place before his eyes.

"I trust his lordship has settled his worldly concerns," continued he, nothing daunted. The Earl writhed convulsively.

"Speak lower, sir," interrupted the faithful butler; "my poor master hears every thing."

His observation was answered by a look from my father which could not be mistaken. There was, indeed, the wreck of my once brilliant parent!—the livid hue of death was rapidly spreading over every feature, whilst paralysis distorted every limb. Who that has ever witnessed the awful translation from life to eternity, without remembering, to the latest period

of their own existence, the dread and hallowed sanctity of that mysterious hour, when the fluttering soul hovers on the brink of oblivion! or immortality! and the tortured body recoils in breathless agony from the coming annihilation. —Oh, life! thou nameless essence of motion, thought, and feeling, what art thou?—a dream! from which all must awaken in the pangs of death.

The moment of dissolution was rapidly approaching: my father's face assumed a brighter tinge; he fixed one piercing never-to-be-forgotten glance on me, expressive of sorrow and affection not to be misunderstood, and with a dying effort sought feebly to unite my hand with that of my brother. A faint peaceful smile stole over his lips, lingered almost playfully for an instant, and was succeeded by a transparent paleness:—a deep sigh, and an immediate relaxation of the muscles, announced our final bereavement.

Natural grief burst forth with unchecked violence. My poor brother clasped me in his arms,

seeming to cling to me for support and consolation. We had both lost our only friend ; the bond that linked us was broken ; but we were drawn still closer by our mutual misfortune. This was, indeed, the heaviest calamity that could befall us, and I now felt the truth of the axiom, that " Death and sin are alone irremediable." All my former discontented murmurings and repining ingratitude rushed forcibly on my mind : how their petty, contemptible selfishness dwindled to insignificance before the awful spectacle we then witnessed ! What was birth, rank, fortune, talents, greatness, happiness or misery ? It all ended in the grave ! A few short years begin and conclude the career of man, of whose nothingness I was now painfully convinced. Hitherto I knew not what it was " to die." It was a new scene that rushed upon me with its most appalling terrors ; and I turned for sympathy, if not for consolation, to my brother, who wept with unmixed sorrow on my bosom.

We were alone in the wide world, with none

to help us, none to cherish, and none to chide. There was a wretched sense of loneliness in that thought; whilst the recollection even of our father's ill-timed indulgence filled us with bitterness. His faults all vanished in the gloom of death, and we remembered only the affection he had shown us, and the unwearied kindness received at his generous hands: no thought of worldly advantages profaned the hallowed purity of filial regret. The being we had loved, and who had loved us, was no more: the eyes that had fondly watched our childish sports were sealed; the lips that had uttered words of encouragement were mute; the hands that once caressed us were stiff and cold; the manly form was stretched in startling immobility. Sin could no longer blight, nor sorrow fade: the career of error and repentance was closed for ever!

We were roused from the quiet indulgence of our feelings, early in the morning, by the arrival of a carriage-and-four, which contained the heir-at-law, Augustus Percival, and Mr. Richardson, the village attorney. If there had

been room in my lacerated breast for any sensation but that of sorrow, my whole soul would have revolted indignantly at the loathed presence of Percival, now "Earl of Glenmore." He had come to take possession of his inheritance: he had come to expel me from my father's sheltering roof: he had come to snatch me from beside the open bier: he had come to assert the rights and privileges of legitimacy,—to drive forth the friendless from their present home and resting-place, to the cold pity of the world, and deprive us of the last sad satisfaction of watching a parent's beloved remains, and consigning them to the quiet sanctuary of the tomb.

Grief was superseded by a different sentiment, on receiving a polite message requesting my presence in the library, where the Earl of Glenmore expected my immediate attendance.

It demanded no common effort of self-command to enable me to obey the summons; and I felt considerable reluctance in doing so, as

the result of the interview could only be fraught with additional sorrow and mortification. I approached the apartment with a timidity of manner unusual to me. I was not prepared for the trial; and my struggling feelings nearly mastered my better judgment, on hearing the beloved name, which, but a few hours before, had designated *my* father, now applied to my enemy, Augustus Percival. I could neither forget the past, nor habituate myself to the melancholy reality of the present.

On entering the room, I was ceremoniously greeted by his lordship, who seemed busily employed with Mr. Richardson, inspecting a variety of documents which were scattered in thick confusion on the table. Both looked uneasy: there seemed a lurking consciousness that, considering our relative positions, might be soon accounted for.

"Mr. Harcourt," said Augustus, with a degree of pompous formality, "I am quite happy that you did not leave Desmond Hall on the melancholy catastrophe which I am informed

took place last evening, at half-past eight; as I wished to express my desire and permission for you to remain here until after the funeral,—of course I include your brother in the invitation,—if such I may venture to call it.”

“Your lordship,” cried I, almost choked with emotion, “is entitled to my warmest thanks; but I cannot possibly intrude one moment beyond absolute necessity.”

“If I can be of any service to you, Mr. Harcourt, pray command my exertions: you, perhaps, may require ready-money for emergencies.”

To say the truth, I was surprised: I had not expected so much kindness, and my heart melted within me.

“Pray do not express any thanks or gratitude on the occasion,” continued he, carelessly; “I hate demonstration. I shall also have the satisfaction of presenting you with a mourning-ring, as a token of the regard always testified by my lamented predecessor towards you.”



The conclusion of this speech was uttered: with a tone and manner so equivocal, that I was at a loss to frame an adequate response, and bowed in silent expectancy of some farther communication.

"I scarcely hoped to have met you on this melancholy errand: you must have received very early intimation of the anticipated event," added Augustus, with a sort of inquiring look which neither bespoke good feeling nor kindness of intention. There was something implied in the observation which I could not comprehend: it conveyed more than exactly met the ear.

"I received the sad intelligence of my father's danger from Joseph the butler, whose letter announced paralysis having taken place," was my simple reply; to which the Earl returned, peevishly,—

"You must, then, have used considerable expedition in your movements, to arrive here so soon; for even stimulated as I was by a laudable desire of comforting and supporting

my kinsman in his last moments, you perceive that, with the assistance of couriers and relays, I was not able to reach Desmond Hall until this morning." He laid an emphasis on the last sentence, and proceeded with great urbanity to say,—

"Perhaps, Mr. Harcourt, you may have been impelled by a still stronger motive, — I do not mean to insinuate necessity, for I am aware, that, during the life of the late lord, you received frequent marks of his munificence; but the case is different now, and Mr. Richardson will soon be able to relieve your suspense on that subject."

The cool, but cutting sarcasm, and affected civility of this speech, stung me to the quick. I could have wept, but I was determined that Percival should not witness any ebullition of feeling I could possibly control. Words refused themselves to my utterance, and I resolved not to linger in a house where I was evidently considered a burden.

"I have great reason to fear,—to believe,"

interrupted the attorney, in a very cautious voice; "that the respected Earl of Glenmore has died intestate."

"No will!" exclaimed I, starting confusedly.

"No will, I suspect," answered Augustus, with a look that spoke volumes.

"My dear sir," observed Richardson, advancing towards me, with a stealthy feline motion of his head, "I do not exactly assert intestacy to be the case, but I greatly fear that no testamentary document can be found, but every search shall be made; rely upon my own personal exertions; and if such should be actually the fact, I am sure my valued and noble client will act with his usual magnanimity in your regard."

"This information is quite unexpected," said I, endeavouring to appear cool; "but I confess considerable surprise, and much doubt."

"Indeed, sir!" retorted Augustus, rather sharply; "however, I have every right to incur your suspicion and dislike, for in these cases the heir-at-law has a most ungracious

task, with great difficulties to contend against. Personally, Mr. Harcourt, I have every reason to regret the absence of a will ; it places me in an odious position ; but I intend proving my amicable disposition towards you, if you will condescend to accept a small provision from Augustus Percival."

"My lord," replied I, "this is not a moment to select for a financial discussion, whilst the late possessor of the property is yet warm with recent life ; but a will was made by my father, and I know it."

"Very strange that we have not discovered it," rejoined the lawyer, "but can you prove that such a deed was ever executed?" inquired he.

"Perhaps I may, in course of time," said I, sternly.

"People often make different dispositions of property, and destroy them afterwards, on some slight grounds of displeasure. I do not deny the frequency of such occurrences ; and it is still a point of law that remains to be establish-

ed, if the destruction of the latest will constitutes an intestacy, or if it tends to set up any former document. Now if you possess any codicil, or even a memorandum, in the handwriting of the deceased, you may set it up, and perhaps contend against the intestacy with success."

I thought Augustus looked dismayed as Richardson spoke.

"Convinced I am, that a will was made, although I do not know where it may be; but I do not entertain a single doubt of the fact," said I.

"You must bring proof to support that assertion, Mr. Harcourt: mere assertion is nothing in law, and would not constitute evidence," answered the functionary of justice; "and even if you should succeed in proving that such a paper was positively executed by the earl, (a circumstance not likely to be ascertained,) its present non-production must infer that it was destroyed and cancelled, to all intents and purposes, by the testator himself."

“Had not Mr. Harcourt’s arrival preceded my own by several hours,” observed Percival, in his most insinuating manner, “I should feel doubly distressed at this painful circumstance. Perhaps your brother might have some idea of the late Lord Glenmore’s intentions, with respect to the personal property: he may have secreted the paper from motives of caution.”

“My brother!” exclaimed I, unprepared for such an insinuation; “poor youth! he knows of nothing but his unprecedented grief: he is incapable of selfish foresight; disturb not his sorrow with idle interrogatories.”

“You must prove the existence of the will,” cried the lawyer, flippantly. “The proof remains entirely with you. I need not say that I will gladly exert myself to the utmost, and afford every satisfactory information in my power. At the same time, it is not possible for me to produce the document, if (as I strongly suspect) it has been destroyed.”

“The only proof I can afford, for the present,

is the assertion received from my father's lips, when last I came here; but this subject had better been deferred to some fitter time, place, and opportunity."

"Nothing like the actual moment," cried Augustus, hurriedly, "the sooner this important business is concluded the better. Perhaps you can inform me where the family papers have been always kept."

"As Mr. Richardson has been a confidential agent, and discharged the legal duties of my father's property for many years, and as I have every reason to believe that the deed in question was prepared, and probably executed under his advice, he must certainly know where such instruments were usually deposited."

The attorney's countenance fell; his eyes sought the ground. Augustus had unintentionally committed his accomplice; but recovering his presence of mind, the former replied, with surprising self-command:

"Situating, as I have been, from the very commencement of my professional career, the

friend and adviser of the lamented, deceased, I have, in the course of my long and extensive practice, become acquainted with many circumstances, that it would not be prudent for me to reveal. No tribunal can compel me to betray the private communications with which from time to time his lordship has honoured me. Numerous draughts, settlements, mortgages, deeds, and indentures have passed through my hands; I consider them of a strictly private nature. Secret instructions have been humbly received, and diligently executed, after which every document entrusted to me has been punctually surrendered into the safe custody of the noble owner; and I maintain that, when once a deed was restored to his lordship's care, I had no right to consider myself responsible for its reappearance. But, Mr. Harcourt; for your satisfaction, and for the sake of the present inheritor of the titles and estates, I do solemnly pledge my word of honour,"—and he placed his right hand emphatically on his breast, — "I do solemnly pledge my word of honour to both,



that every legal instrument prepared or executed in my presence, at Lord Glenmore's request, was faithfully transmitted to him without delay, and was locked up by him in an ancient oak bureau, standing between the windows of his bed-chamber, of which he kept the key, and to which he had constant access."

"We had better proceed to the search," exclaimed Percival, rising from his seat.

"Not now, for God's sake, — not to-day, my lord: wait until . . . until, after" . . . I could not conclude the sentence; but Richardson, who seemed very pale and agitated, interrupted me by saying,

"It is not customary to break the seals until after the funeral. Your lordship had better put off the investigation, particularly as Mr. Harcourt is not impatient."

"True," answered Augustus; "perhaps he may not like entering the chamber until the body is removed."

I shuddered, and concealed my face with both hands.

"No person can touch a single thing now the heir-at-law is arrived," cried Richardson, pointedly ; "and if the will be in existence it must be found. Depend on it, sir, that ample justice will be shown to all those who have the slightest claim." He laid a peculiar emphasis on the last word, which did not escape my notice. Augustus examined me keenly, ere he observed, in a tone meant to be conciliating :

"We must make every allowance for Mr. Harcourt's sensibility, Richardson : we had better postpone this subject."

"With all my heart," said I, "for it is worse than ill-timed."

"Well, then, my dear sir," returned his lordship, with a smile that blasted like a flash of lightning, "we will adjourn the question. Your exertions, Richardson, have quite exhausted your spirits, and breakfast is waiting. Mr. Harcourt, if your feelings would allow of your joining us, I am sure . . . . I should certainly . . . . feel most happy . . . . proud indeed . . . . if you could be prevailed upon . . . ."

I heard no more, having rushed from the apartment ere he concluded the phrase, and rejoined my brother, who accompanied me to the village Inn, where we remained in undisturbed quiet until the last solemnities were performed.

We followed the gorgeous hearse that contained our father's corpse. Unnoticed we shed our tears on the tomb of one whose never-failing kindness had endeared him to our memory. — Augustus, robed in the sables of woe, was chief mourner, supported on one side by Mr. Richardson, and on the other by the apothecary, whilst the illegitimate offspring stood in the society and shared the sympathy of servants. — We once more returned to Desmond Hall, and proceeded in form to witness the ceremony of breaking the seals.

I never shall forget my feelings on entering the apartment in which my father had expired. Every piece of furniture,—the very walls were eloquent, and told a tale of desolation and bereavement. Lord Glenmore led the way; I followed, and Richardson brought up the rear.

His countenance was gloomy, whilst that of Augustus beamed with a transient expression of pleasure. I did not venture to look towards the bed, — that bed of agony on which I had last beheld my best, my only friend ; and I thought the lawyer shared the same intensity of feeling, as I beheld him shrink from its vicinity with an appearance of dread almost amounting to terror, which in him was unaccountable. The bureau was minutely examined ; every parcel, scroll, letter, and paper was unfolded ; every spring drawer and secret recess was cleared and carefully inspected ; but nothing amounting to a will or testamentary document of any kind could be discovered. My father's writing desk was submitted to a similar investigation, attended with the same unfavourable result.

“ Have you any doubts remaining as to the intestacy of the deceased ? ” inquired Richardson solemnly.

“ Whatever may be the doubts I am inclined to harbour, sir, I perceive plainly that the will

is not forthcoming at present," answered I, calmly.

"Nay, my dear Mr. Harcourt," cried the attorney, in his most deprecating tone, you ought to appreciate my zeal,—you ought to know me, and value the respect and interest I experience towards every individual connected with the noble house of Glenmore," added he, looking all obsequiousness. I fancied I detected a glance of triumphant intelligence rapidly exchanged between the parties, but it was so quickly suppressed that it continued at least a matter of doubt.

Augustus again reiterated his offers of pecuniary assistance with a fervour and cordiality that for a moment silenced my gloomy suspicions. I listened patiently, and declined his civilities with firmness, for no earthly power could induce me to accept benefit or favour from him whom I detested. He presented his hand with frankness, and pressed mine with apparent warmth. I trembled and blushed at my own thoughts, gazing alternately at Richardson

and Augustus, until I became bewildered with the chaos of my ideas. Once more I cast a long, lingering, last look around that chamber in which my father had died, and departed from Desmond Hall with my sick brother, destitute alike of means, friends, and prospects.



at the Temple, and moved to very small lodgings, situated in an obscure street, which I endeavoured to make as comfortable as my scanty means would allow. On examining my financial affairs, I found enough money remaining at my banker's to support us for some time with proper economy, and keep us from want until I could strike some plan of future existence, to which my expulsion from college now appeared a gigantic obstacle, for I was left solely on my own resources, and had at present no powerful friends at hand to uphold my pretensions.

I felt morally convinced that Augustus had wronged me. Suspicions of a dark and mysterious nature floated in my mind; a will had been made by my father, leaving me his personal property incumbered with a life annuity for my brother; there was no reason to believe those kind intentions so frequently manifested had since been revoked; his last sigh was breathed in our arms, and every look and gesture was fraught with ardent affection towards us; but the problem was not yet to be solved; and



I left it to be unravelled by the slow unerring process of time.

It was now necessary to seek some path to independence, if not to affluence. I was not over-burdened with that ill-judged pride which induces a man to shun his best friends when smarting under the pressure of misfortune, lest his attentions should be attributed to sordid motives. We ought in this instance to estimate others by the faultless criterion of our own mind. Let us ask ourselves, if the former companion of prosperity was placed in similar circumstances of distress, would it not be a source of unfeigned pleasure, that he should place sufficient confidence in our regard, to seek for assistance at our hands ? I mean this only as it relates to tried and valued friends. As to the busy throng of common acquaintance a man naturally collects in his career through life, it is indeed a hard task to meet them, when the cold hand of adversity presses on our heart-strings.

With these sentiments I walked deliberately to the Clevelands, and lifted the familiar

knocker. A servant opened the door, and in answer to my inquiries, replied that the whole family were still at Brighton. This was the intelligence with which my anxious ears were prematurely greeted. I examined the exterior of the house; the closed shutters and gloomy appearance of the building sufficiently corroborated the unwelcome information. I returned to my lodgings sad and disappointed. Though disposed to await Edmund's return from Brighton before I decided on future plans, yet I could not bring myself to linger in idleness, when the attenuated form of my consumptive brother met my inquiring gaze. I felt that something must be done for him, if not for myself.

It was the depth of winter; not a creature had remained in town except those who could not find the means of leaving it. The very tradespeople had gone to Christmas elsewhere, and left the guardianship and administration of their respective callings to the superintendence of efficient deputies; and the ideas I entertained of taking, or I should rather say, attending day

papila, could not possibly be realized during the momentous season of pudding-eating and pantomimic glory.

There is no period of the year half so melancholy in my opinion, as that misnamed epoch, "Merry Christmas." It can only be mirthful to the young or the callous, — those who have not yet felt the sting of disappointment, or grown careless under its unwearying inflictions; but to those who have lived, who have loved, — the aged and the desolate, it is fraught with bitterness and woe. The present seems to mock in sad derision at the past, and each revolving season brings with it the blight of affliction, and the recollection of those who once gleamed happiness across our path, and are snatched from the participation of our festivities for ever.

The nobleman, the man of fortune, the independent gentleman, who live in London, lodge at the Clarendon, belong to half a dozen clubs, drive about with blood horses, frequent Ascot and St. James's, dine out seven days in the

week, and send apologies to double the number of invitations accepted, cannot possibly have any notion of the misery, privations, and distress of mind endured by persons equally educated, equally refined, and equally proud with themselves. The unsuccessful artist, the neglected poet, the unbeneficed clergyman, the struggling genius, the unprotected author, and the ruined child of former opulence, have all a taste and preference for the elegancies of life, and similar desires for their indulgence. Alive to every humiliation, and to the crushing penury of ill-rewarded talent, they feel still more keenly the absence of those comforts and luxuries in which they would fain participate.

There is something cutting and galling to the soul in the appearance of want: and as I used to wander through the foggy unwholesome streets during the inclemency of weather, bespattered by the passing equipage, and rudely jostled by some ill-bred coxcomb, I imagined that the whole world could read my poverty in the lines of my care-worn face, and that every

casual glance was one of scorn, or unasked commiseration.

As soon as the holidays were over, I made some inquiries in the neighbourhood of my lodgings, in hopes of obtaining employment, either in a school or at private houses, believing that I was capable of preparing youths for college. Finding all my personal endeavours unsuccessful, I resolved on risking a few advertisements in the morning papers, which were carefully worded, not to excite too much curiosity, or to damp any feeling of interest my case might inspire.

“A gentleman having received a university education, is anxious to attend daily pupils at a moderate salary: he is competent to improve beginners in French and Italian if required. Direct to C. H. No. 15, — Street.”

This had the desired effect of procuring a few engagements of various kinds: but unfortunately for me, my scholars lived at an immense distance from each other, and still farther from my own humble abode, which I was obliged to

change to a less agreeable quarter of the town, in order to accommodate myself to the respective localities of my *élèves*. The young gentlemen entrusted to my diurnal lessons and hourly superintendence were of different ages, tempers, and conditions. I remember one in particular, the stupid offspring of a retired grocer, an only son. The mother wished to make him a doctor, as there was a fine opening for the exercise of his professional skill amongst the innumerable branches of his paternal and maternal relations. To make matters worse, the parents thought him a genius, and depreciated my abilities in a corresponding ratio. I toiled hard to knock a little Latin and still less Greek into the greatest numskull I ever met with. I understand since, the fellow has taken out his diploma, puts on a solemn aspect, prescribes as may be, pockets his fee, and does as well as his neighbours, if not better. I never shall forget the insuperable disgust with which he inspired me ;—the heavy eye, the vacant grin, the incommunicative sulkiness, the unthankful tone that distinguished

him. There was no hope of future excellence, no gratitude, no reciprocity, between the master and pupil. This was indeed a trial—of patience; still I fought on, teaching and expounding with more perseverance than I could possibly have given myself credit for; yet all my efforts ended in rendering the boy unhappy, the mother dissatisfied, and myself obnoxious to both.

Amongst others, I had engaged to instruct two brothers in mathematics, Latin, Greek, and the higher branches of literature. They had been left orphans under the guardianship of an uncle,—a strange eccentric man, of whom I saw but little. He catechised me closely as to my abilities, and proved his favourable opinion of my proficiency by screwing down my small salary to the lowest rate, and threw in, by way of bargain, a supernumerary child of his own, a pretty curly-headed boy, about nine years old, who soon became a solace and comfort to me during the arduous task of teaching. He evinced a precocity of talent with a docility and intelligence, combined with

away since then, but my little friend growing into manhood; he is the pride of the family, and likely to shed a lustre on the life he is destined to fill.

It would be endless to sketch the various character and disposition that frequented me under my observation; but however the occupation might have proved at times tiresome, I since have felt the benefit of it myself. My pecuniary cares of tuition did not continue long, for my brother's health grew worse as spring advanced, and I found that my daily avocations were greatly at variance with the nightly exertions required of me. I had not shrunk from exertion, from humiliation, from scanty earnings, from cold rebuke; I had fearlessly defied the rain and cutting wind; but nothing could



employ myself at night, and whilst attending on my brother, who became every day more dependent upon me. After mature reflection, I remembered a solicitor of respectability who had on some former occasion been introduced to me by Edmund Cleveland; and the circumstance which brought this individual more forcibly to my recollection was the frequency of seeing a large well-kept brass plate bearing the name of Ashton, in a street through which I often passed on my way to the houses of my different scholars.

After some scruples of pride, and that indecision of purpose that often attends a doubt of ultimate success, I ventured to call at this gentleman's office, where he received me in a business-like manner, and even extended his courtesy so far as to conduct me into his private sitting-room.

His quiet and friendly demeanour greatly increased my confidence, and I gradually opened my case without much circumlocution, concluding by requesting employment as a copying-clerk.

“ I think, Mr. Harcourt,” answered he, “ that your countenance is familiar to me ; and as the name of Cleveland is ever a passport to my good opinion, I should wish to be of service to you : at the same time, I never intrust any portion of my business to people who are not personally and particularly recommended to me. I am surprised you did not bring any letter or reference from that estimable family in whose society I have often seen you.”

“ You are aware,” said I, “ that they are not in London at present, and unless Mr. Cleveland came to town, I candidly confess I can offer no reference beyond that of some young gentlemen whose studies I have been in the habit of directing ; but finding the constant absence from my brother, who is a confirmed invalid, far from compatible with the care he requires, I wish to obtain permanent employment at my own lodgings.”

“ Ha ! I perceive, you have been a daily, or rather an hourly tutor,” cried Mr. Ashton. “ I pity you from my heart ; but I confess this

application surprises me. You *were* reading for the Bar : by what juvenile imprudence have you been forced to abandon a profession at once honourable and lucrative ?”

“ Misfortune, sir, may not always be the result of error. The Bar demands an income independent of its contingencies.”

“ And I conclude, accordingly, that you do not possess that very necessary independence,” observed the lawyer, looking keenly at my shabby surtout. He then proceeded to examine me with considerable acuteness as to my capabilities of discharging the occupation of engrossing-clerk satisfactorily. He questioned me closely as to my knowledge of business and its routine ; my experience in drawing deeds, and preparing cases for counsel, and my acquaintance with the principal statutes : to which I answered modestly, but in a manner that proved to him my fitness for the undertaking.

“ Nevertheless, Mr. Harcourt,” continued he, after a moment’s reflection, “ I cannot reconcile your present circumstances with the edu-

cation you have evidently received, and the station in life you have been destined to occupy. I should be sorry to encourage a spendthrift, or a *roué*," added Mr. Ashton, wavering between the suggestions of prudence and a kinder feeling.

"At least, sir, the very circumstance of my seeking employment, proves that I am no idler; and that I prefer the hard task of earning a bare maintenance by manual labour, to the more easy and less honourable resources of gambling speculations, with the thousand nameless means of subsistence in which London abounds."

"Endowed as you really appear to be, you are wrong in relinquishing all prospects of the Bar. Conscientiously I cannot advise it. I should be sorry to see you consigned to the mere machinery, whilst you might impel the movements of the whole."

"In the meantime I must live, and I must support my brother, who has no other friend, no other tie, but myself. I regret the sad alternative, deeply and bitterly: the attainment

of celebrity in my profession was once the goal of my ambition. I consider it the path to every distinction, and the widest field for the exercise of talent and perseverance. In giving that up, I surrender my only chance of future success, and I abdicate my social position in the world to provide for its cruel necessities."

"You are industrious, Mr. Harcourt?" inquired the attorney, abruptly.

"I would wish to prove myself so," answered I, humbly.

"As you say, wants must be supplied; but if that object was once accomplished, you might then resume your more elevated studies," observed Mr. Ashton.

A ray of hope glided into my heart, as he spoke: already my imagination overstepped the bounds of reality, and I clasped the lawyer's hand with gratitude in mine, as I assured him that no exertion on my part should be wanting to fulfil his delightful suggestions.

"Well, well," exclaimed he impatiently, "this is all very proper; but I must still take

the liberty of asking a few questions. What time have you for reading after the business of teaching is over, and the business of copying-clerk has commenced ?”

“ If you decided on giving me sufficient employment at my lodgings, I should take a cheerful leave of my pupils. My only object is to secure a sufficient income to support my brother and myself, not as gentlemen, but as honest members of society.”

“ You speak candidly,” replied the solicitor, “ and I am disposed to assist you ; but before I conclude the final arrangement, favour me by relating the circumstances which have, apparently, reduced you to this extremity. I think I heard you were the son of a nobleman.”

“ The illegitimate son of the late Lord Glenmore,” said I, “ who gave me the education and the sentiments for which you have been kind enough to express your approbation.” I then proceeded to the long detail of the leading events of my story, to which he listened attentively.

"You appear an injured man," said he, as I concluded; "yet it is difficult to trace out these things to the original cause. You have also exasperated the young Earl of Glenmore; but I cannot construe personal pique into a reason for the non-production of your father's will. It would not stand good in law," added he smiling. "Yet there is something in your tale that interests me, and I remember perfectly the high terms in which Mr. Cleveland has always mentioned you. At some future period I may perhaps be of serious use; but you must leave the will question at rest for the present. Time may do much towards producing evidence of the paper being legally executed; in the mean time you shall have employment at your own lodgings, which will be the best assistance I can give you. I like to see a young man struggle with his destiny: nothing better than to commence by earning a hard livelihood. I began, sir, by being the drudge of this very office. I breakfasted on milk and water, dined off bread and cheese; but I slept soundly, and

had an excellent appetite, which I was soon able to satisfy. Being punctual, honest, and attentive, I obtained the confidence of my employers, who took me into partnership. They have successively retired from business, and now you see me at the head of this respectable establishment, in which I have already realized some thousands."

Sincerely thanking my friendly patron for his kind encouragement, I was about to depart, when he stopped me, saying, "I do not wish to hurry you, but I have considerable arrear of business on hand, and I should like to see if your energy and application are equal to your good intentions. Pray copy this bundle of documents by Saturday night, and you will earn three sovereigns: it is not much, but more than I give to the generality of clerks."

I gladly and gratefully embraced this handsome and unexpected offer. Thankful and happy to see a small opening to future independence, I resolved on executing the task confided to me with all the precision and punctu



ality I could command. With the elastic tenacity of youth, already I fancied myself on the road to preferment, and clung to the cherished hope of resuming, at some more propitious opportunity, that profession I had been compelled by the pressure of adversity to abandon.

I felt intuitively convinced that Mr. Ashton was not only well disposed towards me, but ready to become a sterling friend if I proved worthy of his good offices. Moreover, I was anxious to profit by his experience and excellent advice, and to apply my leisure hours with unremitting industry to the necessary acquirement of legal technicalities, and that uninteresting mechanism of jurisprudence which had hitherto been rather neglected for the more alluring branches of study. Mr. Ashton was of great use in making me, according to his own phrase, a sound lawyer, without which all the oratory in the world is lost for the want of foundation.

For many weeks I worked with untiring dili-

gence, transcribing deeds, settlements, bonds, briefs, &c., and in short, went through all the wearying drudgery of a copying machine in its most sterile employ, poring over parchment from sun-rise to sun-set, and pondering with dubious ignorance on the equivocal jargon of the law, until the sun rose again on my uninviting calligraphy. Still I got on, and lived (not well) but without incurring debt or obligation, sharing my narrow chamber and scanty meal with my brother, not trespassing on the generosity or claiming the sympathetic aid of friends.

Yet there were moments when the aspect of luxury and the recollection of other days, with their enjoyments, excited a sentiment of regret on passing the well remembered mansions of quondam associates. I shrank from observation with a sense of shame not easily surmounted. I longed to move again in the elegant and elevated sphere of the Viscountess St. Elme. Sometimes at night I paced up and down opposite the house in which I had spent so many de-

lightful hours, watching the lights as they were shifted from room to room, now and then catching an indistinct view of a graceful shadow which I fondly thought was hers; then listening to the receding wheels of the equipage that conveyed the lovely Anastasia to some dazzling assembly, of which she would in herself prove the most powerful attraction. I often lingered near the door in hopes of catching the soft accents of her voice, as she entered the house where I could no longer presume to visit. Concealed in the vulgar throng that crowded the pavement, I beheld her stepping forth in the unrivalled splendour of beauty and fashion. Frequently did the rich and flowing drapery of her attire sweep against my more humble garb, and the subtile essence which completed the luxurious perfection of her toilet gratify my senses with their double sweetness.

As the gay votaries of fashion rapidly flocked to the pleasures of London, my mortifications became less tolerable and more frequent; it was difficult to avoid the passing bow, the stare of

recognition and the well meant but unanswerable questions of—"How long have you been in town?"—"where shall I find you?"—"why did you not call?"—"shall we meet at the——club?" &c. &c. all of which I endeavoured to evade with indifferent success. Not a day passed without my being compelled to cut down some retired street or bye-alley to avoid meeting those with whom I once had been on terms of intimacy and equality. My wardrobe too, which for some time had assumed a most unsatisfactory appearance, now required a thorough replenishing. My hat also, that signal-post of a man's circumstances, put on that *sleepy* look that beavers will wear, when worn long enough to require a *nap*. This was an additional trial; and although Mr. Ashton paid me with scrupulous regularity, I could not bring myself to deduct a guinea for the appliances of personal vanity from the small store I wished to appropriate solely for the necessities of my poor brother. But my feelings were soon put to a

severer test than they had yet undergone. My poverty and degradation hitherto had only affected my outward circumstances. I was yet to learn the extent of my humiliation.

## CHAPTER IX.

L'estime des hommes est une mauvaise mesure de la valeur des esprits et des choses.

CHARLES NODIER.

Il n'y a pour l'homme qu'un vrai malheur qui est de se trouver en faute, et d'avoir quelque chose à se reprocher.

LA BRUYERE.

ONE bright shining Sunday-morning, escaping from the wearisome confinement of the preceding week, I supported the feeble steps of my brother through the beautiful avenues of Kensington gardens. We had been brought to the gate in a hackney-coach, and the same humble conveyance waited to restore us in safety to our lodgings when tired of exercise. This was a luxury I could ill afford, but the invalid seemed so anxious to get out, so pleased at the

idea of enjoying the blessings of warmth and fresh air combined, that I could not refrain from granting the small indulgence, and managed to arrive at such an early hour as to preclude the possibility of meeting acquaintance. The weather was delightful ; there was a sabbath stillness in the air, not a solitary promenade was to be seen ; for the orderly and religious portion of the community were attending divine service at the different places of public worship, and the idle, dissolute, and depraved, are not capable of enjoying the calm beauties of a summer Sunday. As I looked at the green-sward beneath our feet, the redundant foliage arching above us, and the transparent horizon of ethereal space, I felt how far preferable was the pure majestic temple of nature to the close, garish, overfilled, and tasteless edifices into which the fashionable congregations of London are weekly crowded. I loathe the modern churches of our metropolis, with their scarlet pews and gorgeous galleries, redolent with female vanity and unbecoming levity ; the doors

encumbered with livery servants, and the parting benediction half smothered in the rumble of carriages. The very altar of our God is made the shrine of fashion, and the stranger who might wish to join in public prayer, must fee the pew-opener ere he can find a spot to kneel and address his Maker.

We basked in the sun, lounged in the shade, sat on benches and rambled through the trees for an hour. We were preparing to leave the garden, as I knew we should soon find them thronged with visitors if we remained much longer ; but had not proceeded far in the direction of the gate, when a splendid phaeton drew up on the side of the sunk fence which divides Hyde Park from the promenade. I knew the arms and liveries directly. The carriage was Lord St. Elme's, a glance assured me that Anastasia was in it, and a second view convinced me that she was not alone. Glenmore held the reins!! Again and again and again the evil genius of my destiny seemed to cross my path : he was now the companion, the familiar of the woman I loved !



I stopped at a sufficient distance to escape detection, under the deep shadow of a large tree, and beheld him hand her from the vehicle with that look and manner of confident intimacy which can neither be assumed nor mistaken. Oh, the anguish, the maddening torture of that moment! I would have given worlds to hurl him to the ground,—to see him prostrate at my feet,—to crush and annihilate him as he had crushed and annihilated me. I writhed in powerless agony, as I watched the officious gallantry with which he arranged the folds of the rich cashmere that fell in graceful drapery around her: there was a display of audacious presumption (I had almost said libertinism) in every gesture, that made my heart palpitate with indignation. Her slender wrist leant upon his arm; she raised her eyes to his; he smiled triumphantly. I could have died!—it was impossible to speak—to act. I could resent no insult;—it was impossible for me to interfere. Augustus might pollute Lady St. Elme with his hateful touch; he might revel in the

.

brightness of her beauty, unchastised by me : he was not accountable for his conduct but to those bearing the rank of gentlemen. Bound down with the trammels of poverty, exercising the menial employment of scrivener, I could no longer lay claim to that distinction ; I was no longer admissible into the society of visiting and visitable people ; no man was obliged to give *me* satisfaction ! I was . . . nobody.

I trembled lest the beautiful Anastasia should recognize me, and blushed for the first time at my own exterior. I was, however, spared the pang of being either seen, accosted, or cut by the viscountess. I contrived to screen myself from her view. A cold look, an averted glance, a distant salute from her would have blighted me. It was enough to relinquish her presence, her smiles, her songs, and her conversation,—to see my place occupied by another,—my very recollection merged in the fascinations of pleasure ; but I could not bear her contumely.

How I envied, how I execrated Glenmore,—happy Glenmore!—dissolute, depraved as he

was. He shared the privileges of friendship, the advantages of rank, and fortune had gained him admission into that magic circle wherein I no longer ventured to appear; he was received, invited, courted, and perhaps—favoured.—Oh heavens!—the thought was delirium. I never felt the degrading influence of poverty half so keenly as at that moment.

We returned to our lodgings, my whole soul intent on Lady St. Elme. I longed to burst the fetters that bound me to my present state of existence. I wished to be something—somebody, that she would not despise,—to resume my station in the social scale, and elevate myself (no matter how) to a degree of equality (not *with her*, but) with those whom she condescended to notice.

It occurred to me that my finances might be improved, and that I could raise myself at least above the condition of a clerk, by trying authorship; and in the intervals of my regular occupation, which were not numerous, I exerted myself in composing a romance; and, on completing the

third volume, indulged in the pleasing hope that I had at last discovered the real bent of my genius, and should burst forth at once in the glorious field of literature.

I waited on many publishers. Some did not choose to patronize unknown authors, whilst others only allowed the works of especial celebrities to issue from their well-assorted shelves. Some said that the days of romance were over, and recommended my attempting a different style, something after the manner of E. L. Bulwer, or Mrs. Trollope.—Some feared my politics savoured too much of the Conservative, whilst others were alarmed lest I belonged to the number of modern Iconoclastes, who would soon undermine the moral edifice of Church and State. At last I was advised to prune my story, which, perhaps, might then suit a *periodical*. I did so... and had the satisfaction of seeing myself in print, and receiving ... thanks for my elegant communication.

Mortified and dispirited, I gave up the fairy

domain of fiction, and continued strenuously in my old routine. I have since found that my fate was not singular: there is a system of chicanery kept up between authors and publishers, that I never discovered until I had endeavoured to enlist amongst the former. I have not quite decided as to the respective faults and merits of either parties; but this I know, that the public are the sufferers.

With the help and advice of Mr. Ashton, I managed to diversify my employment. Occasionally, when my brother was sufficiently well to bear a short absence, I became a reporter for newspapers, and being gifted with considerable memory and facility, gained a tolerable emolument. This occupation suited me on many accounts. It was fraught with interest and instruction. How I have listened to the voice of persuasion, the language of conviction, and that powerful strength of argument, from which there is no appeal, used alternately in the British Senate. I have heard those noble, glorious bursts of patriotic eloquence, that are sure to

arouse a responsive feeling in the breast of every true citizen, until I felt my whole soul wrapt and bound up in the national question. Thus I endeavoured to elevate my own style, by selecting the best models from amongst the parliamentary orators. I studied the sarcasm of Brougham—the sweeping, thundering declamation of O’Connell—the reasoning acuteness of Peel—the flowery graces of Shiel—and the debating argument of Stanley,—Whigs and Tories, Liberals, Destructives, Conservatives, and Republicans. I felt that honesty of intention and firmness of purpose rendered every speaker an object of interest in his turn, reserving always to myself my own private and unchangeable political creed, of which it is not requisite to inform the reader.

Winter was approaching, and London becoming both dull and uncomfortable, when I was unexpectedly surprised by hearing of Cleveland’s arrival. He had been on the Continent with his family, and had only just returned when Mr. Ashton announced the joyful intelli-

gence. I determined to lose not a single moment in calling on him. I felt no shame, for I was confident of his kind and generous sentiments. I knew he would not judge me by the cruel criterion of success; and although I did not mean to accept a single favour, yet I longed to hear the voice of sympathy and affection, and hurried to the duties of my scanty, ill-supplied toilet.

I cast a few unsatisfied glances at my threadbare, but well-brushed coat, ere I made up my mind to leave the narrow looking-glass; but my brother restored my equanimity, by assuring me that the rust of indigence had not eaten beyond the surface—I still looked like a gentleman. I had that morning shared my little hoard with the physician, who flattered the invalid with delusive hopes of an ultimate recovery. Science conjectured where common sense would have despaired. A sentiment of independence raised my spirits to a degree of cheerfulness and comparative content to which

I had long been unaccustomed. I knew that I was free from debt, that my individual exertions had sufficed to keep us above want for several months, during which time I had been spared the degradation of borrowing. Oh, there is pleasure in the fulfilment of duty ! and I walked proudly forth in the consciousness of my own integrity.

I entered Cleveland's hospitable mansion with a slight tremor. I was admitted to the study, and in another instant clasped in Edmund's warm embrace.

"Harcourt ! Harcourt !" said he, reproachfully, " what have you been about ? You lazy fellow, you positively did not vouchsafe to write a single line since your father's death, which I heard accidentally."

" Indeed, Edmund," answered I, " you must forgive me ; my neglect did not originate in any want of gratitude—but I have been ill, and disinclined to correspondence."

" So that is the reason my two last letters remained unnoticed : because, forsooth, you



were tired of an old friend," observed he, mournfully.

"No, dear Edmund, you are not just: I had nothing but ill news to communicate; and a sentiment of delicacy forbade my inflicting a recital of misfortunes upon your patience."

"Some love affair, or some imaginary evil haunts you, I am sure," continued Cleveland; "but you, really, are altered. What is the meaning of this, Charles; surely you have not been guilty of extravagance?"

"Extravagance!" echoed I, with bitterness; "if you knew but all, the idea would never have presented itself. If you knew what I endured since we parted, you would be surprised at my present appearance."

"My dear Charles, you speak enigmas," said my companion.

"I speak the truth," said I; "and had not your heart been estimated beyond that of any other human being, I should not now be here trespassing on your leisure."

"For God's sake, explain yourself," cried

Edmund. "I never yet deserved to forfeit your confidence: surely, you will not withdraw it now —"

"Never! Cleveland, until you desire it," answered I, with emotion. I then narrated the history of my father's intestacy, and my own destitution. Edmund shed tears as I proceeded with my tale, which was frequently suspended by questions and observations. At length I came to a conclusion; and for some moments we both remained silent.

"If I did not love you as I do," said my friend, after a pause, "I might feel hurt that you did not apply to me for assistance."

"I called, and you were out of town," answered I.

"But a letter would have reached me," returned he.

"Yet there is a difficulty in writing: besides, I wanted nothing, — thanks to your excellent introduction. I managed to get employment from Mr. Ashton, the solicitor. I am independent now, I assure you."

“Independent!” repeated he; and for the first time, he glanced towards my meagre habiliments. “But it is not too late,” continued he, pressing my hand affectionately.

“Stay,” interrupted I; “make no mistake: I will not accept a pecuniary obligation, much as I love you, Cleveland. Do not ask it of me; but I will claim your patronage for an unsuccessful candidate to literary fame. I have tried authorship, and can do nothing with my MS. for lack of a friend to push me forward. Can you assist me with a publisher?”

“With the greatest pleasure,” exclaimed he; “but I cannot comprehend the cause of your failure, knowing your talent. I begin to fear that the republic of letters is something of a close borough.”

“I will not acknowledge a complete failure,” interrupted I; “for a periodical took compassion on my effusion. The labour of three months—the very essence of my imagination, was shorn of its fair proportions, and printed in a magazine.”

“Of course you were handsomely remunerated,” observed Edmund; “for the periodicals pay well in general.”

“They paid me...compliments; for which I returned many an evil interjection!”

“There must be a little favouritism in all trades,” cried Cleveland: “we will settle this trifling misunderstanding. I am acquainted with several unexceptionable booksellers, and will undertake to bring you forward under the best auspices. Possessed as you are of genius and feeling, your books must succeed. Already you have all the elements of authorship, — a creative fancy, and a refined taste: ease of style and felicity of expression are acquired by practice. Allow me to become purchaser of your copyright, and I think I shall make an excellent speculation.”

“Take it, dear Edmund, as a present: it is of no value to me now. I had founded all my hopes and expectations on its celebrity; but my *amour propre* is annihilated. I hate the very sight of my own handwriting.”

“No, Harcourt; a bargain is a bargain. The first edition for me; the second for you. I only trust you will not repent the arrangement; for, perhaps, I may turn a penny in the way of profit: less likely things have happened.”

I sought to dissuade Edmund from his Quixotic plan, but without effect. Before I quitted the house, he made me draw up an agreement, resigning the profits and benefits of a first edition to himself; and then placed a bank-note, to the amount of two hundred pounds, in my hands. With considerable difficulty I prevailed on him to accept my written acknowledgment for the sum, which I was resolved to pay at some future opportunity, should my friend become a loser by his generous undertaking. He reluctantly received my note-of-hand, as he said, solely for my gratification; and I discovered since, that he subsequently burned it for his own.

“As to your father’s intestacy,” continued Cleveland, after considerable reflection, “it is questionable. You have, however, mentioned

the particulars to Mr. Ashton. I am lawyer enough to know that nothing can possibly be done yet; but we must not lose sight of Augustus. Apropos,—he is a notorious gambler; and all gamblers are rapacious. It is the intense anxiety for more,—the craving desire of appropriating the property of others to their own purposes, that makes people fond of play. I never yet knew a man that devoted himself exclusively to cards, dice, and their attendant vices, that might not be induced to commit felony, if the temptation happened to be strong enough to conquer the fear of detection; but we must not judge harshly or prematurely, even of Augustus. To-morrow, Charles, I shall introduce you to Messrs. — and —, the fashionable publishers; they are men of liberality and discrimination, and have lately assisted in fitting up an elegant modern library for my sisters. Apropos,—you must not forget to cultivate the girls (call them Muses); for if once you embark on the ocean of fiction, remember that novel-reading ladies will

Be your best friends. You must propitiate these last-mentioned divinities,—much better patronesses than the blue-stocking deities of Parmassus.”

We conversed for a considerable time ere we separated. Two friends meeting after a protracted absence, have always a host of questions and answers to exchange; and it was late in the day when I took my leave,—withstanding all Edmund’s tempting invitations to a *tête-à-tête*, mutton-chop, or beef-steak dinner in his own sanctum-sanctorum, for which I give myself great credit.

In a few hours, I made some desirable purchases in the way of dress, as I did not wish to disgrace my patron’s kind introduction. I have since found, by experience, that a poor man contending with pecuniary difficulties should endeavour to impose on strangers by an outward appearance of opulence and fashion. A man condemns himself by the texture of his coat: in the estimation of some, a shabby-looking fellow, and a roguish-looking fellow, are almost syno-

nymous terms; and, by a perversity in the human mind, those who do not seem to want assistance are the most likely to obtain it.

is, therefore, advisable not to allow the depreciation of the currency to affect the externals, possible; and always to hoist the flag of independence at all risks, and under all circumstances.



## CHAPTER X.

Upon her face there was a tint of grief . . . .  
 The settled shadow of an inward strife,  
 And an unquiet drooping of the eye,  
 As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.

LORD BYRON, *The Dream*.

Que peut une femme ? Souffrir et cacher la douleur.

MADAME DE WALDOR.

No home, no hope can bring relief  
 To her who hides a blighted name ;  
 For hearts unbowed by stormiest grief  
 Will break beneath the breeze of shame.

E. L. BULWER, *Falkland*.

I AROSE the following morning, after a delight-  
 fully refreshing sleep of many hours. My spi-  
 rits rallied, and my very features expanded with  
 newly imparted hope. I placed every reliance  
 in Cleveland's unshaken regard, and confided  
 my present pleasing prospects to my brother,  
 who had shared my adversity, and whom I

clined even looking at my MS., having  
so many engagements of a similar na-  
was surprised at the alteration a few s-  
tences spoken by Edmund could produ-  
mystery was not impenetrable; for I di-  
subsequently that he intended risking  
lication of my MS., on his own  
with the stipulation of a certain premi-  
paid to me when the book reached a  
edition. Pleased, however, with the sty-  
composition, Messrs. — and — seemed  
to close with me for the entire copy  
a work on the same plan; and as this  
ment was beyond my most sanguine  
tions, I thankfully entered into the ag-  
and returned with renewed energy to  
ary pursuits.

on this excellent man, who received us in his usual business-like manner. We told him of the anticipated success of my maiden publication : he shook his head rather incredulously, but at length yielded to our united reasoning, concluding at the same time,

“ Do not give up the law, — that is all : write novels, write poetry, write any thing you like ; but, my dear Mr. Harcourt, do not neglect the profession ; for I think I may perhaps live to see you on the bench, or at least with a silk gown.”

I readily promised obedience, as, although my ambition was of a less towering character, I still entertained some share of his predilection for the bar. We parted with mutual assurances of good wishes and good intentions, and he reminded me before I left the office, that if my new speculation did not prove as successful as we anticipated, my old occupation might always be resumed if agreeable and convenient.

In the course of a few weeks my book was advertised, and soon after it appeared under the most favourable auspices. The reviewers spoke

loser by his generous and disinterested, and was fully repaid the sum he advanced, with as much delicacy as li He often joked with me on the subject speculative faculties, and threatened to an author himself, by way of opposition

My second work was very nearly complete. I had bestowed the utmost care in revising and correcting for the press. My reputation was now of the utmost consequence; it was necessary not only to keep up to the first production but to surpass it, and I toiled assiduously to merit the encomiums of friends, and disprove the criticisms of the hostile critic. Though frequently pressed to dine at the Cleavelands, I strenuously resisted their flattering invitations, fearing that the pretensions of their society might militate against the

power. Nothing could exceed the unremitting attention that my brother received from Edmund and his amiable family; unwearied kindness was evinced, without the slightest display or ostentation: it flowed spontaneously from the heart. Choice presents of rare fruits, foreign preserves, old wines, and delicacies that *could not be* purchased, were supplied with profusion from their extensive hot-houses, generous cellars, and well-stored establishment. Books and prints, with all the ephemeral pamphlets in vogue, were regularly furnished in rapid succession for the invalid's especial amusement; and our invaluable friend would even crown his kindness by reading them aloud when the pressure of business prevented my doing so. These touching proofs of tender interest towards him, were a thousand times more grateful to my feelings than all the manifold favours so bounteously showered upon myself.

At length I concluded the volumes on which rested all my hopes of fame and popularity, and I was not disappointed. Nothing could equal

future, secure to myself an income facing my expenditure. I will not dilate sentiment of pride with which I saw me extolled and circulated. The blush consciousness as the voice of approbation pronounced accents on my grateful ear, made my cheek, and my crushed ambition raised my drooping head. I was of consequence the artificer of that consequence, I was in the estimation of the public, I was also in my own. There is no aristocratic world half so dazzling as that of intellect to that aristocracy I belonged.

With the rapidity of thought, I had a future existence of peaceful study, leisure, and social intercourse. Already

London, embellished with all the elegancies and refinements of life: and I confided my intentions with the expansive communicativeness of success, vainly believing that my brother would join his hearty concurrence.

But he for whose gratification I was anxious to make every sacrifice, turned a cold and discouraging answer to all my propositions. Grown peevish with long suffering, he pined for change, and imagined that a timely removal to the sea-coast would be the means of restoring health.—The frequent cough, the languid voice, the bright and glazed eye, were all eloquent interpreters of his hopeless condition; and I did not hesitate in adopting his suggestion without delay. For a few days we balanced the respective merits of Devonshire and Hastings; but our medical attendant decided in favour of the latter, as the journey was much shorter and the road superior.

We took an affectionate farewell of Cleveland, who undertook to manage all my literary negotiations during our absence, and proceeded

until the termination of his frail existence, and why linger on the sad subject of grace? he bowed his head like a drooping flower, murmured a tender prayer and benediction, and died without a struggle in my arms.

I felt the loss of the patient sufferer more than a twelvemonth, had been in my care and companion, more acutely than I possibly have imagined; but we love those we protect, and I loved the being for whom I had toiled—the object of unremitting care, and when he departed, I felt as if an abyss had opened between myself and the world was broken.

I intended returning to town soon after his funeral; but my own health had sustained a severe shock, and I was unable to do so.



wrote to inform Cleveland of my intentions, and settled myself accordingly, meaning to commence another more serious work to occupy my now solitary hours. But the melancholy quietude of my regret was not destined to remain undisturbed: I was painfully surprised by the arrival of Lord and Lady St. Elme. We met casually in the street; the viscount stepped forward with that good nature which, alas! was the redeeming quality of his mind, and made up, in a very small degree, for the deficiency of higher virtues.

The interchange of civility was mutual, and speedily followed by an invitation to dinner, which I had not sufficient resolution to decline.

Again, I saw and visited Anastasia—again, I beheld her in all the fascinations of beauty and accomplishments; and I was happy!!!—Happy in the poor privilege of worshipping the profane idol of my corrupt heart: and although my position in life no longer authorized my revolving in the same elevated circle, yet I

I knew that mortification must await that I was venturing in a precarious and career; but I was willing to bear all, and even my self-esteem, provided the viscountess allowed me the gratification of basking in the sunshine of her presence.

Meanwhile it is not to be supposed that St. Elme remained stationary at Hastings. His movements depended on caprice, and he took an occasional peep at his wife when nothing else absorbed his attention; devoted the rest of his time to Melton Mowbray, Newmarket, Mrs. Bellenden, Tattersal's, and his dear friends the Earl of Glenmore. During the very frequent absences I became the constant associate of Anastasia; every encouragement and time and opportunity could afford was of use: we were both very young, and very

sources of her grief, and told me a tale of chilling sorrow and bitter disappointment. St. Elme indulged in all the ruinous excesses of the gaming table; nor was it limited to the nightly orgie of cards and dice; the turf, and the ring shared his daily care, and succeeded in dissipating the scattered *debris* of his tottering fortune. Augustus was his principal companion, and seconded the fatal propensity by joining in it. — The viscount's property was impaired beyond redemption. A valuable wood had been cut down and sold for the supply of immediate exigencies, and a large sum had been raised on a mortgage, which completely left the unfortunate nobleman at the mercy of the mortgagee. Of these distressing particulars Anastasia was perfectly well apprised. Having no children, she felt it less keenly; besides, hers was the utter ruin of the heart. She had long since lost her husband's love and confidence; his fortune was but a trifling addition; the jewel was gone and the casket was valueless. Thus we were constantly thrown together: we walked, we rode, we read,

we spoke, we re-acted the parts we had already performed in London; I became the depositary of all Lady St. Elme's secrets and feelings; we wandered together through fields, through lanes, we roved on the wild sea shore—

“No eye to watch—and no tongue to wound us,  
All earth forgot—and all Heaven around us.”

I sat with her during the voluptuous twilight of evening, listening to the harp, listening to the voice, gazing in her eyes till their soft beams penetrated my soul,—talking of *herself* to *herself* until the wild enthusiasm of the moment had nearly overwhelmed my better principles, and betrayed the passionate aspirations of my unbounded love. Circumstances seemed combined for my destruction.

In our numerous walks in the romantic environs of Hastings, we had occasionally observed a most interesting lady, whose feeble steps, supported by a maid-servant, denoted but too well the object of her sojourn. She eluded the notice of strangers, and, dressed in mourning, a double fall of crape round a widow's bonnet completely

shaded her features. She was evidently past the bloom of youth,—almost beyond the middle age ; but there was something exquisitely lady-like in her appearance that attracted my notice. She was also in a very delicate state of health, which recalled to my mind the recent death of my brother, and affected my spirits. I soon discovered that she was a Mrs. Seymour, and had resided for some time near Hastings. Her history was perfectly unknown, as she visited no one, received no company, and was in every sense a perfect recluse.—More than once I had unconsciously met the mild glance of her pensive eye ; it made my heart beat with hitherto unexperienced agitation ; I felt as if her presence excited an interest it was impossible to analyse. Anastasia had also remarked the prepossessing exterior of Mrs. Seymour, and hazarded conjectures as to her probable situation in life, which always ended in asserting that she must be very superior to the general herd of watering-place loungers.

One day Lady St. Elme requested me to ac-

...appeared, assisted by her  
tendant.

Lady St. Elme observing she was  
and offered her seat, which was silent  
ungraciously accepted by the invalid.  
of satisfaction seemed to illumine  
features, but the placidity of her  
was soon disturbed by a struggle  
which exhausted her remaining strength  
completely, that she sunk almost from  
the chair. Anastasia produced her veil  
whilst I proffered eau de Cologne;  
duties were, however, strenuously required  
the waiting maid, that was busily  
chafing the transparent palms of her  
mistress, who, she observed, was too delicate  
venture on such fatiguing walks. I  
retreated a few steps and called out

sition I joyfully acceded, especially as the viscountess promised to wait my return. By degrees Mrs. Seymour began to recover from the effects of her sudden indisposition, and on raising her languid head, gazed earnestly, even fondly on the beautiful face of Anastasia, which was bent in anxious solicitude towards her. "You are too kind," said she in a voice almost inarticulate from emotion. The viscountess pressed her hand gently, and with persuasive softness, said, "Pray allow Mr. Harcourt the satisfaction of attending you in the carriage, which is at your disposal?" Mrs. Seymour cast her eyes on the ground; she was about to decline the offer, but weakness compelled her to resume the seat she had at that moment attempted to quit. Anastasia reiterated her request, with that irresistible earnestness which seldom fails to produce the desired effect. Having hesitated through modesty alone, the invalid at length yielded to her gentle entreaties; but it was evident that her previous refusal had been dictated by delicacy of sentiment rather than cold-

ness of disposition. With trembling steps, I supported her to the equipage. Lady St. Elme assisted in disposing cloaks and cushions round the emaciated form of Mrs. Seymour, who murmured with a grateful smile, "Thank you, oh thank you ! this is too much." She brushed away the unbidden tear which trickled slowly down her wan cheek as we drove rapidly from the library door, through which we caught the last glimpse of the viscountess's white robe, as she retreated from the street. The compressed lips and varying hue of my companion, denoted but too evidently the painful struggle within. I did not attempt to break the silence for some time. At last I ventured to hope that Mrs. Seymour would permit me to inquire for her on the morrow, and presented my card. She held it with tremulous uncertainty, and answered, after considerable hesitation :

" Mr. Harcourt, it is not possible to express my sense of obligation . . . of kindness . . . of undeserved attention received at your hands. My health is too precarious to allow of my en-



couraging visitors of any sort . . . in general I adhere to a system of retirement (self-imposed solitude) which I find equally beneficial to body and soul . . . I ought to decline seeing you . . . but . . . in gratitude it is impossible to refuse ; the satisfaction will be great . . . and should you sometimes feel interested in the fate of a . . . stranger . . .” here her voice sunk into a convulsive sob — “ I shall be happy — too happy, to answer your inquiries in person.”

I was delighted with this intimation, and replied that Lady St. Elme and myself would have frequent opportunities of calling.

“ I hope,” observed Mrs. Seymour, gravely, “ that her ladyship will not take the trouble ; indeed, much as I should probably like her society, I cannot — *will not*, indulge in it. I am a wretched invalid, Mr. Harcourt, and could not permit the young . . . the beautiful . . . the happy . . . Anas — viscountess,” added she, evidently correcting herself, “ to waste her freshness in the gloomy precincts of a sick-chamber. Lady St. Elme must excuse me.”

might have been induced to offer. I  
she had selected for her retirement,  
elegant retreat. The garden, laid out with  
siderable skill, surrounded a neat cottage  
though small, was furnished in exquisite  
I assisted the wearied inmate to the drawing  
room, that seemed admirably adapted  
purposes of study or meditation; the  
French windows being incumbered with  
riant creepers, which cast a melancholy  
on the sofa appropriated apparently to  
Seymour's constant use. On consigning  
charge to the faithful solicitude of her  
took leave with the intention of resuming  
visit on the following day. Thither Anne  
accompanied me, full of anxiety to improve  
acquaintance already commenced; but  
mutual mortification our inquiries and

The preceding day, it was not yet desirable that she should be allowed to see company,—all excitement being peremptorily interdicted by the physician. At the same time a very gracious message was returned by the servant, who expressed the deep regret that her mistress experienced at being deprived of the pleasure our society would have afforded.

The viscountess was disappointed at not penetrating the interesting *interieure* of the invalid; and vainly sought to unravel the outward mystery with which she was apparently enveloped; and as we retraced our steps through the garden, I fancied I could distinguish the pale taper fingers of the recluse between the interstices of a venetian blind, which strange contradiction threw me into a wild field of fruitless conjecture. In a few days I called again, and was more fortunate. I obtained the hoped-for admittance into Mrs. Seymour's quiet saloon: my being unaccompanied rendered the interview far less embarrassing to myself; for the presence of Anastasia acted like a spell on

every thought and action. Her movements, her impressions alone, occupied me; and I recoiled with terror, lest any casual witness should read the burning characters with which consuming passion had branded my soul. I feared the calm observing eye of indifference would search the *penetralia* of my heart, and discover the blasting secret of my love.

I entered the room unembarrassed, and was welcomed with mingled kindness and diffidence. Mrs. Seymour's manner was pre-eminently engaging. She was sufficiently cordial to place the most awkward intruder at ease, and yet sufficiently composed to restrain the most aspiring familiarity within the bounds of respectful courtesy. She did not seem above the world; she was beyond it: she neither displayed the dignity of rank, the distinctions of fashion, nor the slightest shade of intellectual pride, with that conscious superiority, from which even the best and wisest are scarcely exempt: hers was merely the elevation of the mind,—raised, purified by the scorching fires of adversity, from

the interests and affections of mortality. Already she belonged to another sphere; and the being who spoke and answered me, was more like a disembodied spirit, yet hovering in benevolent pity on the confines of that earth which had ceased to be its resting-place, than the actual individual, whose gentle demeanour and placid countenance had hitherto attracted my notice, during our transient meetings.

She lamented that circumstances must preclude her the pleasure of receiving Lady St. Elme. "I regret it the more," added she, in those deep, soft accents which convince the hearer by their persuasive harmony,—“I regret this sad privation more acutely, as her ladyship has kindly, so kindly, evinced a wish to visit me. But I have resolved on giving up society until my health is sufficiently restored to permit my indulging in its enjoyments with impunity.” She sighed deeply, and smiled — oh! such a smile! — a tear would have been less eloquent.

“Lady St. Elme’s intimacy would certainly compensate Mrs. Seymour for the exertion,”

returned I, "her ladyship has a soothing gentleness of manner calculated to gratify an invalid. Her voice is melody itself; very like your own," cried I, not intending to convey a stupid compliment by thus expressing the unaccountable association produced by the impressive accents of Mrs. Seymour.

"You are kind," interrupted the recluse, with a slight blush; "I must thank you sincerely for your perseverance: yet a system of self-denial, the firm determination of years, cannot be relinquished. But the friendship of a sick woman, Mr. Harcourt, is not particularly desirable;—the loss is *mine*, not hers."

From this decision I felt there was no appeal. I answered in a few unmeaning phrases, and the conversation flagged; Mrs. Seymour looked agitated; but she soon recovered herself, and commenced asking a few questions as to my pursuits, to which I returned candid answers. She approved of the bar as a profession, and deplored the extreme instability of authorship. From myself, the dialogue slowly reverted again

to the viscountess: her beauty, her talents, were rich, inexhaustible sources of eulogium. I spoke warmly,--not as I felt,--that would have betrayed the enthusiasm of my homage,--but as I thought others who knew and loved her less might speak.

Mrs. Seymour's inquiries became more numerous, and more minute, as my answers grew less reserved. She had gradually lulled me into security, and her questions frequently amounted to what would certainly be deemed impertinent amongst the generality of people. Yet the tone of tender philanthropy and melting sensibility with which these interrogatories were directed, stripped them of every ungracious characteristic: they evidently were not dictated by curiosity, but by regard. She caught with breathless avidity at my replies: the subject was one in which I was too deeply interested to feel tired; but I was surprised, I was alarmed at the insatiable anxiety she evinced; and from the strange and almost unearthly expression of her dark hazel eyes, I

trembled lest I had unguardedly said too much. She appeared to read my very thoughts. I became slightly embarrassed, and at length she perceived that the eager desire of obtaining particulars of Lady St. Elme's habits, manners and domestic affairs had considerably outstepped the bounds both of prudence and good breeding. She endeavoured to repair the error of which she was painfully conscious.

Again I seized the opportunity of pleading Anastasia's wish to become acquainted, and the gratification to both arising out of such an intimacy :

"Your curiosity, if I may be permitted to use the word, would not only be satisfied, but repaid. Do allow me to introduce Lady St. Elme : let her come, and cheer your retirement with her presence," exclaimed I, in hopes of obtaining a partial victory.

"It cannot be," was the laconic and melancholy determination of my new friend, who added with a deprecating sigh, "But you can visit me sometimes,—we will talk of her."



It was time to depart ; and as Mrs. Seymour pronounced the last sentence, I rose resolving to profit by the permission it implied, and to cultivate a friendship which increased in value, as the obstacles to its attainment were multiplied.

There was something singular in her words and behaviour, which was difficult to define, and equally difficult to comprehend. The pleasure I experienced in conversing on the perfections of Anastasia was too intense to permit my continuing to feel any distrust at the pertinacity of Mrs. Seymour's interrogatories. The astonishment of the moment was soon merged in the all-engrossing recollection of the lovely being who thus seemed to be the object of our mutual interest and solicitude.

## CHAPTER XI.

Man's love is of man's life a thing apart ;  
 'Tis woman's whole existence ; man may range  
 The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart,  
 Sword, gown, gain, glory ; offer in exchange  
 Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up the heart,  
 And few there are whom these cannot estrange :  
 Men have all these resources, we but one—  
 To love again, and be again undone.

BYRON, *Don Juan*.

Un souffle, un mot, puis un silence,  
 C'est assez mon ame devance ;  
 Le sens interrompu des mots,  
 Et comprend ta voix fugitive ;  
 Comme le gazon de la rive,  
 Comprend le murmure des flots.

LA MARTINE

Tempus omnia revelat.

My visits, once sanctioned by the invalid's permission, became frequent ; and the more I studied the softened traits of character which

distinguished her, the more I prized her truly Christian and unobtrusive virtues. Charitable in the highest degree, and in the most unostentatious manner, she not only indulged that most selfish of all pleasures, almsgiving—but she practised the more difficult principle of forbearance: hers was the charity of language, the charity of thought, the charity of construction, the charity of hope, the charity that avoided the infliction of pain by word or inference; hers was the charity of . . . religion: not that I mean to question the excellency of charity in its more usual acceptation; but we must not mistake the means for the end, and claim a merit where we only exercise a propensity; for the sweet satisfaction we feel in sharing our superfluities with the necessitous, is one of those glorious emanations from the Deity with which our gloomy path is so wisely and bounteously cheered. Like the bright and endearing links of social affection, or the tender overflowings of parental love, these are feelings that spring spontaneously from the heart. Happy, thrice

happy, those who cling to these heavenly gifts, for such they are, and seek not the delusions of vanity in place of the gems and flowers with which Providence has strewed the way! but we must consider them as blessings, not virtues—as coming from above, not proceeding from ourselves—pleasures in which we are allowed to participate, but which we have not created.

Mrs. Seymour was sorely stricken by misfortune; sorrow had left deep traces on her brow, and her lowly spirit bent under its load of grief and contrition. It was in vain that she endeavoured to veil the mental anguish that consumed her: she might, perhaps, succeed in concealing the cause; the effect was but too apparent; and it was impossible to behold her without perceiving that her life would ultimately fall a sacrifice to the internal struggle. Preparing with humble resignation for the awful change she felt was awaiting her, Mrs. Seymour, if not cheerful, was at least a placid example of sorrow, soothed by religious principle. Amusements she had none, though her

occupations were numerous, and in unison with her character. Shrinking from the contact of the rich, the powerful, the happy, even from the good,—the destitute, the forlorn, and the wretched found ready access to her. Misfortune was a claim to her pity, and grief a passport to her sympathy. By her tender care, the inroads of disease, if not checked, at least were rendered less appalling; and the approach of poverty was frequently obviated by her timely aid.

Her days were chiefly devoted to the duty of providing and administering to the wants and necessities of the poor, or to the pious conversation of an aged curate whom she had known for many years, and who now came to enlighten her solitude with the bright promises of futurity. Yet she indulged one pursuit, I had almost said pleasure, for she evidently considered it as such; and even of that partook sparingly, as if fearing the consequences of any enjoyment. She painted and drew exquisitely—with a master's hand; fondly, enthusiastically lingering over that "serenely silent art," which brings

with it, and perpetuates the fleeting images that once have filled us with delight, and that have eluded our grasp to mock us through the cold medium of memory.

A beautiful figure of the Magdalene, placed in the most judicious aspect over the fire-place, was the production of her graceful pencil: the whole conception was lovely, and seemed in harmony with the disposition of the gentle artist, and suited the peaceful retirement of the place. Such a picture would scarcely have suited the gorgeous banquetting-room of opulence, where the fascinating smiles of beauty, the well-appreciated jest, the wildly-echoed laugh, and oft-quaffed goblet circulate, in rapid succession, amongst the votaries of fashion and pleasure. It would not exactly have appeared advantageously as an altar-piece; the passion of grief and remorse was not depicted with that vigour, or rather exaggeration of expression, which, in general, pervades that class of painting:—No, the Magdalene was an intellectual Magdalene—a Magdalene, whose grief lay too

deep for tears, and was too keen for display. There was hope as well as sorrow in that sweet, penitential face; there was faith blended with repentance: it was the produce of feeling rather than imagination; it was the work of the heart, rather than that of the head.

Mrs. Seymour did not now paint figures; she only studied landscapes and flowers, as they required less exertion, and were finished in a short time,—two advantages, that in her estimation counterbalanced the sublime perfections of historical composition. It was only by slow degrees that I thus became acquainted with the talents and pursuits of my new friend, who gradually, but not reluctantly admitted me into her privacy. To say that I felt pleasure in her society, would be an insufficient expression to convey the irresistible interest she inspired, and which I could neither explain nor analyse, even to myself; and as my stubborn passion for the viscountess reached its maddening climax, I found occasional relief in the calm, and spiritualized conversation of the recluse. She seemed

to exercise a magic spell upon the turbulent excitement; her voice melted on my ear, quelled the fierce burning aspirations of soul.

I was better, I was happier, during interviews of heavenly communion; the relief of bodily suffering, and unrepining meekness was of some benefit to me. Mrs. Sey appeared like a light thrown on my path to guide me from the abyss of passion before me, but these short moments of virtuous resolution were rapidly succeeded by an overwhelming action, when my return to the presence of Anastasia produced its intoxicating consequences, and I loved her more ardently, more madly ever. In vain I sought by every effort of reason and of principle to subdue the guilty flame that raged within me. Again and again, I recalled my father's last injunctions, and reflected deeply on the tale of error he had communicated. My own sad degradation, my nameless, friendless, powerless situation displayed themselves in all the humiliating details of



day's recurrence; and I shrank with horror at the possibility of entailing a similar destiny on the lovely and still innocent object of my fondest affection. It was not for me to consign her with heartless selfishness to the depths of sin and remorse, to blast her reputation, to witness her shame, and to triumph in the ruin of her expiring resistance, and then to see her fade and wither under the cold influence of neglect, the contumely of strangers, and the avenging spirit of retributive justice. Vainly I struggled with the seduction that assailed me; the reasoning of philosophy, the pleading of religious scruple, were fruitlessly opposed to the wild delirium of love. But the light of virtue itself would have been eclipsed in the transcendant radiance of Lady St. Elme's beauty.

As autumn advanced, many gay visitors contributed to enliven the society of Hastings: parties and balls became more frequent and more numerous, and as the period of mourning expired, I was tempted to join the agreeable throng, amongst whom I found many old ac-

quaintance, who kindly recognised and invited me to their respective residences. Perhaps I should have been wiser and better by declining the proffered civilities of people far beyond me in rank and fortune ; but Lady St. Elme was the magnet that regulated my movements, and I acted from impulse, not reflection.

As usual, the viscountess's own *soirées* concentrated every thing attractive, and were without exception the most elegant entertainments for the season. Amongst the distinguished ornaments of these brilliant *re-unions* I observed a charming girl of superior manners, and conversational talents, far above the unmeaning gossip of young ladies in general ; — for there is nothing more odious than the overpowering volubility, or languid affectation, of fashionable *debutantes*. Like Byron, I had hitherto been disposed to hate all Misses, who swarm with the eagerness of recent emancipation, from the *form* and *backboard* rectitude of a school-room, to the blessings of long anticipated flirtations carried on with the lounging, attitudinizing lati-

tude of modern sentiment. Glorious days of ottoman and album notoriety ! what would match-making mothers and husband-hunting daughters do, if ye should ever go out of favour ? No article of furniture, no produce of this century of steam-engine and inventive combination, can ever display a foot, an ankle, an arm, a hand, a waist, a . . . bustle, with half the success of a crimson ottoman ! May it long remain in bulky preponderance in our over-filled saloons !

To resume the subject of Emily Vyvian, for such was the name of the lady that attracted my notice. She was very young, not more than eighteen, and had already been left an orphan some years. She now resided chiefly with the family of a clergyman, who was a distant relation, and her guardian at the same time. Reports were various as to her fortune and expectations, which were, as usual, either exaggerated or depressed, according to the personal feelings, hopes, and interests of the promulgators ; but that was all equally immaterial to us. Anas-

tasia liked her for herself alone, and we neither of us expended a second thought on the probable inheritance which it was rumoured might devolve upon her. Pretty without being beautiful, Emily's countenance possessed much character and expression; she could be looked at even by the side of Lady St. Elme; for the artless playfulness of a fine physiognomy, was sure to please without dazzling the beholder, and conveyed the impression of considerable talent and great sweetness of disposition. She was a universal favourite; so much unpretending good nature, combined with refinement, elegance and intellectual superiority could not fail to secure the regard and esteem of all, however reluctant people may be to acknowledge worth in others, especially a young and handsome woman.

Emily possessed abilities of no ordinary description, but at the same time was gifted with that invaluable sense of prudence which prompts a really clever person to avoid exciting envy by injudicious display. She was happy

in her own mind, and did not seek to destroy the self-complacency of others by asserting her individual claim to merit. Thus, people finding their own excellences undisputed, readily yielded a voluntary tribute of applause to her who had never attempted to exact admiration at the expense of a rival.

Popularity, so often, so unsuccessfully courted,  
—the goal of the many, the contempt of the few,  
—popularity, from which none will absolutely shrink, although they may pretend to despise it,  
—popularity, ever vacillating, ever receding  
boon of universal good-will to which we all aspire, in the greater or the less degree, and when it eludes our grasp, is vilified and scorned, —  
popularity, the *ignis fatuus* of the million, is not so difficult of possession provided we seek not a monopoly: real merit may obtain it, false assumptions never can; and although we hate to be over-awed by the perfections of others, we are more ready to forgive the real excellency, and to punish the affected one; as the latter is a libel on our judgment, the former challenges

our generosity. Many truly great and amiable individuals have been extremely popular, not from any peculiar effort of their own, but from the fact of genuine merit being allied to a corresponding quantity of humility; and we are inclined to grant freely that which is not claimed as a homage from our personal inferiority. Thus it was that Miss Vyvian inspired esteem and affection: she neither descended to the level of the vulgar, nor appeared to raise herself above it; she was sufficiently high-minded in herself without endeavouring to increase the elevation by looking down on others.

Both Lady St. Elme and myself felt sincere pleasure in Emily's society; yet, of all women, none could be more dissimilar than the viscountess and her friend. The contrast often struck me, but I did not seek to draw comparisons between them until my acquaintance with both had assumed a far different aspect. Their very forms and features were at variance: Anastasia was redolent with loveliness like a Corregio, or a Titian; her hair, her eyes, her lips,

all breathed the spirit of beauty; her figure, which already had attained its full maturity, possessed the advantages not only of womanhood but of fashion, and of dress. Not a colour, not a shade was misapplied; every tissue was chosen with discriminating taste. Lady St. Elme was remarkable for the extreme elegance of her toilet; not that either the variety or costliness of the material were particularly conspicuous, for the richness of her wardrobe was merely such as might be supposed from her rank and station; and the slight transitions from light and dark, thick and thin, gorgeous velvet, or undulating gossamer, were entirely regulated by the weather.

Miss Vyvian was quite a girl; slight, pale, and rather delicate than otherwise: naturally lady-like, naturally graceful, she was too young, too inexperienced, to be fashionable; her step was buoyant with youthful elasticity, her eyes bright with innocence; her hair, which had not yet been tortured into curl, was smoothly parted on her fine expressive brow, and braided with neat sim-

plicity. Emily gave promise of future beauty, whilst Anastasia fulfilled the very *beau idéal* of actual perfection.

How different were the feelings inspired by the two! But I sought not to analyze the sentiments which filled my breast: overwhelming love was excited by the fascination of the one, and intellectual gratification was felt in the presence of the other. I adored Lady St. Elme, and I liked, I valued the estimable qualities of her friend. If the external difference between them was thus marked, the mental characteristics were no less so.

It was not at the period of which I am writing, that I discovered Lady St. Elme's moral deficiency;—not that she was ignorant,—no: she was well versed in various languages; she drew, danced, played, sang, and read poetry with exquisite pathos. She was an accomplished woman; few equalled her, and none excelled. Her literary taste was faultless, and her conversation delightful: but she had been neglected;—yes, neglected in the very point



where most care is required: her talents had been cultivated, and her soul . . . left utterly untutored. She had neither learned to think nor to act; she was the child of passion, and the victim of impulse: from passion, she had married Lord St. Elme; from impulse, she now shunned him: and there existed a total absence of that all-powerful religious principle which regulates and supports the wavering resolution when temptation assails, and provocation opens the way for the contemplation of evil.

Emily was far from possessing the exquisite polish of the viscountess; but the gem beyond all price was still preserved *intact*. Her mind, free from the contamination of school or fashion, retained its pristine purity, unbiassed by prejudice or affectation: she blended the extensive and vivid information of experience with the touching simplicity of girlhood. Her feelings as yet unexcited and unchecked, with all the dewy freshness of youth like pearls clinging to them, had not yet learnt disguise, or required concealment: every passing emotion, if not be-

trayed, might be conjectured from the conscious look, the ill-disguised agitation, and threw a halo of interest around her.

Emily spoke well, when the modesty of her age and sex permitted her to do so with propriety. She was gifted with a power of expressing her ideas (which were frequently of the most piquant originality) in those felicitous terms which imply the exact meaning, neither more nor less than the required image being conveyed. The French aptly specify this peculiar quality by an untranslatable phrase, which every reader in the nineteenth century may probably understand, — *des mots heureux*, which designates so truly that which is so very difficult to define.

Such is the best description I can give of Emily Vyvian, who added the general compliment of *talens d'agremens* to the real treasure she otherwise possessed. She played tolerably, drew better, and danced—not with the vapoury undulations of Anastasia, but with gentlemanly ease, combining the animation of

youthful elasticity. She did not sing, and I was glad of it: few, indeed, could compete with the viscountess in purity of intonation, or in graceful expression; and Miss Vyvian was too charming in her own style to be eclipsed, even by Anastasia; whilst I was too anxious for her permanent happiness, to wish her possessed of that dangerous intoxicating gift of music, which, however it may embellish, is no real solace to the mind. If, becoming mere creatures of imitation, time is dedicated to the acquirement of mechanical perfection in executing divisions and chromatic difficulties, the performance gives but little pleasure: surprise, wonder, and applause, alone can be elicited from the listeners: but if, on the contrary, the singer be deeply imbued with an acute perception of the sublime notes she is articulating, and identifies herself with the soul-subduing strains she seeks to convey, that same intense sensibility which produces the finished musician, must influence the general character, and soften the moral energies into the voluptu-

ousness of deep feeling. But Emily had another endowment nearly as dangerous,—it was poetry; yet poetry is far from possessing the too enervating character of music. The poet expresses his sentiments and ideas through the medium of language, not of sounds: words are to be read, commented, remembered, and criticised; but music!—oh! there is a dreamy mystery in music that speaks to the secret impulses of our nature! There is not a line in Tasso half so expressive of the tenderest affection, as the duett in Rossini's *Armida*, commencing with *Amor possente nome*; nor is there a single scene in Voltaire's *Semiramis* that conveys the agony, the mortal anguish, and guilty remorse of the sublime *Se la vita ancor*, and *Notte terribile*, which I never yet heard without the cold, creeping, shuddering sensation that *murder* was implied by its gloomy and terrific harmony. Poetry has its specific subject, and wanders from the didactic to the descriptive, from the dramatic to the pathetic: it has its regular walks and thoroughfares. The Frenchman was

not far wrong, when he declared that *La poesie, c'est de la prose qui rime.*

But to return to Emily, who wrote well and read better; her selection of books was judicious, and I was more than flattered on observing one of my own productions honoured by a shelf in her elegant boudoir.

Anastasia, who was rather the *creation* than the creature of romance, duly prized Miss Vyvian's charming endowments, of which she spoke in terms of generous friendship; but the attentions I could scarcely refrain from showing the interesting Emily, had already elicited a slight feeling of jealousy on the part of Lady St. Elme, which could scarcely be perceived but by the person who had the honour of exciting it; the innocent object herself being totally unconscious of any species of rivalry, and looked up to the dazzling brilliancy of Anastasia without suspecting the possibility of a comparison being established. Yet the manner of Emily was tinged with a touching shade of unaffected timidity, and the manifestation of

timacy with Lady St. Elme was rapi  
ing. Amongst other fashionable a  
ments her ladyship painted flowers  
and had with infinite skill finished  
bouquet, which she carefully place  
own hands in an elegant album.  
kindly presented to me with the gr  
ning ease so peculiar to herself. I  
were coloured with that warm velvet  
glowed in her own rich style of be  
the careless but matchless grouping o  
gay could only be compared with the  
ing negligence of her own attitude  
charmed with this delicate *souvenir*,  
scarcely abstract my admiring gaze  
painting

sketched with that characteristic quickness she constantly evinced ; but on her returning the album to me, I observed the following lines traced with an uncertain hand, which I immediately read aloud :—

Like summer wreaths or winter snow,  
Love passes with the changeful season ;  
Be mine sweet friendship's purer glow,  
With soft esteem and guiding reason.

Faithful and kind, both warm and true,  
Untouched by time, like time undying,  
Friendship alone ! I ask of you,  
Far dearer than a lover's sighing.

And if with crushed affection blighted,  
In future years, you scan these lines,  
Remember, the regard I plighted  
May friendship soothe, as love declines.

On concluding the last stanza, I observed that Lady St. Elme looked grave and turned pale ; but recovering herself instantaneously, said with an enchanting smile, “ My dear Miss Vyvian, I almost envy your charming facility of versification ; you have just expressed my own sentiments so completely, that there is nothing

she *was* rather agitated ; and I could not but think that Miss Vyvian might yet be aware of a more tender regard than the friend she so candidly professed.

In the evening of the same day, I accompanied the viscountess to her customary walk on the sea-shore ; the sun was setting in all its majesty, and streaked the sky with the brilliant hues that prognosticate a continuance of fine weather, whilst the wave reflecting the golden light of the evening sun, fell with soothing music on the pebbly strand. Anastasia's arm was round mine. Our conversation wandered from general subjects to themes of more personal interest. The poetry of the morning was alluded to, and the sentiment which had dictated the



an appearance of partiality on her part was more than likely to flatter the vanity, if not win the lasting affection, of a man just twenty-two. There was something indescribably delicious in Anastasia's tone of pique, and languid replies, which soon assumed the language of poetry and romance, till she actually verged on the regions of metaphysics. Endeavouring to define the intricacies of her own feelings, she unconsciously said more than could possibly be intended. My own hitherto concentrated passion burst forth in wild and hurried accents; we spoke of love and its delirium until we started at the sound of our own voices; and sinking gradually into silence, we indulged the sweet reverie of doubt resolving itself into the conviction of mutual attachment. The lonely hour, the secluded spot, to which we had unintentionally prolonged our walk, the deepening gloom of twilight, all contributed their softening influence. I pressed Anastasia nearer to me; she leant on my bosom with delicious tremor! Did she tremble with love? or did the chill fast-falling

dews of evening penetrate the clear tissue of her muslin robe? I twined her sable boa a second time around her yielding form; her silken ringlets saturated with damp, fell dishevelled, and swept her bended neck in waving playfulness. I whispered word after word of affectionate solicitude: I told her again and again of my fondest aspirations. She listened to the ardent language of passion without dismay, and I collected sufficient encouragement from the trembling half-articulated avowals which answered mine, to hope or rather to *fear* my wild dreams would at last be realised in all their glowing intensity. I pressed her to my palpitating heart, covered her fair forehead, her parted lips with burning kisses, drank deep of the intoxicating sweetness of her love, and quitted her with the maddening assurance that another day would seal my fate, and in conferring the long-desired possession of Anastasia, doom me to the unutterable pangs of eternal remorse.

## CHAPTER XII.

Tu ne me verras plus ! C'en est fait pour jamais,

Tu ne reviendras pas.

CHARLES NODIER.

Tout s'est évanoui, mais le souvenir reste.

DE LA MARTINE.

I was not a practised seducer; I was not a libertine: I was not corrupt; .... but I stood on the brink of all these. Carried forward by passion, already it was impossible to retreat from the gulf of destruction before me. Even if I could have contemplated the expediency of flying at once from temptation and Anastasia, a feeling different from that love which had hitherto impelled me, checked the

retrograde movement. It was honour,—yes, worldly honour,—that bane of virtue, that foe of humility, opposed every better sentiment. Honour is a strange principle; it recoils from falsehood to commit murder; it resents insult by adding injury; it loaths a blow, yet sheds blood; it avenges wrong, and divides families. Honour perseveres in folly till it becomes sin; honour reaches a climax of obduracy unchastened by repentance, unexpiated by time . . . . . Honour forbade me to forsake Lady St. Elme. Morally she had committed herself beyond retraction: the purity of her heart was sullied; its secret impulses, its vague desires, had been divulged: there remained but the one barrier, and that was completely stripped of all its outworks of principle and religious scruple.

Although I had neither formed any determined plan of action, nor sought to gain her affections by any unworthy means, we had both advanced deep in the career of error; and I felt that hesitation was useless, and that our destinies must henceforward be blended into one;

for good or for evil. Anastasia and I would abide by each other. My first idea was to snatch her from St. Elme. I could not bring myself to deceive the man under his own roof, and I sickened at the probability of his return, which would either separate me from the object of my love, or stamp me with a double dye of preconcerted villany.—I resolved to elope with Lady St. Elme, and in course of time, when legal proceedings had been pursued, to make her — my wife — *my* wife! — Oh God! what a frightful succession of hideous images was linked with that one epithet! — it seemed already as if I loved her less. . . . . All lovely, all elegant, all accomplished, Lady St. Elme was degraded already in the estimation of the man who was about to snatch her from her home, her husband, her duty, her affluence, her fame, and her happiness. It is thus the ends of retributive justice are strangely brought about. The destroyer is the very first person to cast the stone of reproach; and when a woman loves most, when all beside shrink from her but the

one, it is then she feels the insufficiency of passion, the sting of remorse, and the coldness of ingratitude,—when she has sacrificed *her* all, he regrets the bond of circumstance that unites them, and loaths the very love he once solicited.

The workings of the human heart are wonderful; and there is no period when we feel more truly the inadequacy of all wishes and enjoyments, than at the very threshold of gratification. We pause to contemplate the approach of the long-expected felicity; already it has lost the illusions which it received from imagination, and we are discontented with reality, as a nearer view deprives it of the bright medium of fancy.

I returned to my chamber, after taking leave of Lady St. Elme, in a storm of conflicting emotions, which I had not the power to repress. On one point only I was resolute—the necessity of taking Anastasia from Hastings, and concealing at once our guilt and our flight, in some distant country. I felt that not a day was to be lost, for Lord St. Elme was expected from

London ; and it was only consistent with common prudence to avoid the wretched subterfuges and evasions his presence would occasion.

I wrote a few hurried lines requesting an interview on the following morning, expressing my sentiments and future plans, in the most coherent manner I was able, and despatched the same by a confidential servant to the Viscountess ; from whom I received the following reply :—

“Of my love, Charles, I can no longer entertain a doubt, nor can you. I give the first, the most convincing proof that you could require,—I sacrifice all. When I met you, when I felt a powerful nameless interest attract me towards you, little did I think that the affectionate and pleasing confidence which you inspired would lead to this terrific conclusion. Harcourt ! is it yet too late, or have I already plunged too heedlessly to retrace my steps from the guilty climax to which I am hastening? Do I dream, or is it really as your letter assures me—

your influence predominates. I shall  
see you to-morrow . . . . Whilst tracing the  
I fancy that I could write volumes. I  
the floodgates of my soul were open  
that the tide of sentiment threatened  
whelm the last vestige of lingering reason.  
Have I said too much? or is there yet  
remaining of the devoted attachment.

“ANAS

I treasured this precious missive, and  
read until every line, every character was  
graven on my memory. I passed a time of  
inexpressible wretchedness. Oh! the  
various hopes and fears,—the suspense and  
anticipations, the frightful chain of  
consequences which alternately assailed me!



his last advice, now unheeded, rung loudly through the silence of night ; his sad example, so lost upon my lawless inclination, was cruelly displayed in all the gloomy mystery of my own origin. Fearful thoughts haunted me,—my mother's faintly remembered form blended itself with that of Lady St. Elme ; — then both faded from my perception, and I only beheld the dying Mrs. Seymour. Sometimes the vision of Emily flitted across me, like a bright seraph from above, but it was indistinct, and vanished in the confusion of other objects. My uneasy slumbers were dispelled at an early hour, by the entrance of my servant, who brought me a note from the invalid, claiming my society at dinner on that day, purporting that no excuse would be accepted. I hesitated ; but it was only momentary ; the quiet conversation of Mrs. Seymour was calculated to calm the agitation of my mind previous to the decisive step which I contemplated. I sent a verbal message in the affirmative, and prepared for my interview with the viscountess. Punctual to my engagement,

conquered every obstacle; she promised me . . . mine only . . . to live for me . . . to give up every thing . . . I begged her to allow me to make arrangements for my departure on the ensuing night, and that every preparation should be completed. I put myself in readiness to escort her at once. With some difficulty I obtained from her the key of the conservatory, which communicated with her chamber and opened into the garden from whence I knew she could leave without risk of detection.

I remained with her until the late hour warned me that it was time to go. I only left her to accelerate the measures.

executed, I endured all the misery of reaction. The intervening hours passed heavily ; I could not read, I could not write, I could not rest. Midnight . . . midnight, still far distant, was the ultimatum of my existence. The sun was shining in all his noonday glory. I watched the progress of the increasing shadows, I watched the dial, I watched the tide, I listened to the tolling bell as its solemn vibrations announced the progress of time. It is an awful period of life, when we are going to do that which will for ever stamp its freshness with the mildew of guilt.

At five o'clock I bent my steps towards Mrs. Seymour's cottage. I wished to see her once more ; it was a strange impulse, but I longed to gaze on her pale placid countenance, and listen to her soft persuasive voice . . . for the last time. I found her better than usual ; she seemed a little flushed. A phial on the mantle-piece was marked "Laudanum ;" that circumstance appeared singular, as she never had recourse to stimulants. Our dinner passed in varied conversation, kept up with considerable spirit by

, and she had craved in her youth the result of observation had been mat-  
contemplative life; she not only re-  
many pleasing and curious facts, but  
drew some delightful conclusion, either  
religious or philosophical tendency. Like  
she never lingered but to extract  
We continued this strain until we im-  
reverted to Lady St. Elme. It appeared  
the subject was equally engaging to  
for neither of us seemed sensible of hav-  
menced the conversation. It was singular  
her visits had been so firmly declined,  
that her character excited so deep an in-  
the breast of one, who was on the verge  
oblivion, and whose chastened thoughts  
longer dwelt amongst the bright but pe-  
treasures of this world

"She sings exquisitely," answered I; "indeed her education has been perfected with infinite skill. She was certainly intended for a Corinna," added I with a smile which came not from the heart.

"True, Mr. Harcourt; I have often heard so; but I wished to inquire as to the energies of the mind, and the regulation of the understanding. Is Lady St. Elme a woman of sense, or a woman of sensibility?"

"Of sensibility decidedly," cried I.

The invalid sighed, and continued: "But has she sufficient power of soul to check and direct that sensibility in the best manner?"

"I consider that her ladyship's disposition has greatly depended on the influence of others: had her virtues, her native gentleness, her warmth of affection, her sweetness of temper, been cherished and judiciously encouraged by a sage adviser, I doubt not but she would have been a blessing as well as an ornament to society."

Mrs. Seymour looked agitated. "You appear on terms of intimacy with the viscountess: per-

“ but he is not at Hastings now.”

The face of the recluse assumed a  
ous expression. “ She is too young  
fascinating to be left thus with impunity  
she lament her husband’s absence ?”

The treacherous glow of consciousness  
tled on my cheek as I endeavoured  
with sincerity, “ that Anastasia ~~was~~  
by St. Elme’s neglect.”

“ Should you ever marry, Mr. Haro  
sued my friend gravely, “ be attentive  
wife : it is a false shame, a false pride  
think that a pretty inexperienced woman  
treated carelessly. If you love your  
must show it ; frequent absences, and  
.. ..

hears more, sees more, understands more, than even a clever female. It is his duty to watch, to guard, to direct, perhaps to command, if necessity should require it."

"Ladies do not easily forgive neglect," said I, trying to be cheerful.

"It is not that they are unwilling to forgive it, and many worse offences," replied the invalid sorrowfully, "but such conduct exposes them to additional temptation,—to the approach of others; to their commiseration. It is dangerous for a forsaken wife to excite the pity of men."

I quailed under Mrs. Seymour's scrutinizing glance: she perceived her advantage and continued. "I may be mistaken, but Lady St. Elme does not appear very happy in her domestic circle."

"Indeed," cried I, "she has been peculiarly unfortunate in her selection. The Viscount is totally unfitted for her; he is dissipated, profligate to a degree, divested of every refinement either of sentiment or pursuits."

unworthy of such a woman; she  
love him, most devotedly at one tin

“Poor thing!” murmured Mr  
“she is thrown away. Do you b  
any affection for *her*?”

“Deeds, not words,” answered  
events, he shows none.”

“The silver links are broken, the  
friend: “she is disappointed; the  
youth have faded; bitter, bitter  
that awaits her! ’Tis sad, where th  
ized bride finds the anchor to whic  
futurity is confided, up-rooted by t  
adverse passion, and contending in  
Lady St. Elme religiously disposed:

“Not particularly,” answered I



panion, "the heart recoils upon itself. She feels she is no longer of consequence or of value to her husband,—that her beauty blooms unheeded and her talents are exercised in vain, her pride humiliated, her affections blighted; she clings to the world, to worldly enjoyments for compensation, and tries to make up for the desolation within, by the excitement of external objects."

"Most true;—not finding happiness with her husband, she seeks it in the amusement of a fashionable life."

"Therefore her trials and temptations will be greater. Heaven protect her! for she has none to watch over her," replied Mrs. Seymour with energy.

I shrank from the observation of my companion, as she concluded this sentence; it seemed as if she read my inmost soul.

"Should Lady St. Elme," continued the recluse, "ever be placed in the constant society of a man capable of appreciating her loveliness, without sufficient principle to check the proba-

suggestions of vanity, and the delusion of dishonour; but when once the bond of affection is loosened by either party, the inward heart craves that sympathy and approval from the society, admiration, and approbation of others, which was denied by the indifference of the wedded partner."

Mrs. Seymour's remarks were of too great import, either to be passed by in silence or to be replied to with carelessness; yet it was a difficulty I could bring myself to frame a reply to. "Unfortunately," said I, "Lady St. Vincent has no children to interest her sensibility."

"No children!" echoed my companion. My voice choked with emotion, "no children! She will then be contented to remain a widow."

during the period of helpless infancy or inexperienced adolescence. Did she ever tell you her history and her name, before she married Lord St. Elme?"

"No," said I; "but she assured me that her mother was dead."

"Dead!—yes," replied the invalid,—“dead to every thing but remorse!!—Charles,” added she, with a look that penetrated my heart, “I trust it is not too late; but beware of the sad results to be anticipated from your growing partiality for Lady St. Elme!”

I covered my face with my hands, alarmed at the strange and unexpected turn our conversation had assumed; but the recluse proceeded with animation:—

“Harcourt! you are shocked at my suspicions; but if you knew the misery, the terrific consequences you may now be entailing, not on yourself individually, but on the woman you think you love, my admonitions would not appear unjustifiable or ill-timed. Listen to me — listen to the voice of friendship! — a warning

mutual destruction. Why injure and  
a husband who has received you  
tality? Betray him not. — Pause!  
in the career of sin! Let not my wo  
tered in vain; nor my advice be  
late.”

“Speak, madam,” cried I, seizin  
with impetuosity; “it is not too la

The eyes of my companion filled  
as she resumed, “Thank God for t  
assurance! Heaven has heard my pr  
Harcourt! has not the example of y  
proved a beacon to guide you from  
in which you are going to plunge!  
you had once a mother!”

“Yes! yes, Mrs. Seymour,”

quired the invalid, in a voice of concentrated emotion.

“Torture me not,” exclaimed I. “Who are you? What know you of my mother? Does she yet live?” . . .

“Oh God, give me strength to complete the sacrifice!” interrupted my companion, falling on her knees before me, producing a bracelet similar to that which Anastasia wore.

I leant for support against the couch, without venturing to raise my eyes to the contrite weeping form of Mrs. Seymour. A thousand wild thoughts, nameless conjectures, dim reminiscences, crowded on me. I waited in speechless expectation for the conclusion of this astounding scene.

“You have seen this ornament before?” inquired the recluse, in faltering accents.

“Often, very often . . . the viscountess” — My hesitating reply was suspended by Mrs. Seymour, who rejoined —

“Did you never see this bracelet previous to your acquaintance with Anastasia? Many,

“Heavens!” exclaimed I, “An  
....”

“Your mother!” interrupted she  
other moment, the long-lost parent was  
in the arms of her son.

## CHAPTER XIII.

I speak not—I trace not—I breathe not thy name,  
 There is grief in the sound—there were guilt in the fame;  
 But the tear which now burns on my cheek may impart  
 The deep thoughts that dwell in the silence of heart.

Too brief for our passion, too long for our peace,  
 Were those hours—can their joy or their bitterness cease?  
 We repent—we abjure—we will break from our chain;  
 We must part—we must fly—to unite it again.

Oh! thine be the gladness and mine be the guilt,  
 Forgive me, adored one—forsake if thou wilt;  
 But the heart which I bear shall expire undebased,  
 And man shall not break it—whatever thou may'st.

*MSS. Poem, attributed to LORD BYRON.*

A considerable portion of time elapsed before either Mr. Seymour or myself recovered sufficiently from the effects of our excessive agitation, to give utterance to our sentiments. The gushing torrent of freshly-awakened feeling swept all in its whelming progress, and we

tracted in her conduct, and thus to  
a degree of serenity ; and resuming her  
and dignified composure, observed  
derness :

“ To me, dear Charles, this delight  
very is not a surprise. From the first  
of your arrival at Hastings, I became  
the nature of the tie existing between  
beholding you, casually, I felt convinced  
were my son. A mother's eye has  
your movements, and a mother's heart  
in solitary desolation for the solace you  
has lately afforded. But it was not  
that I should enjoy, with selfish impropriety,  
blessings your presence conferred ; you  
your soothing assiduities would have been  
sufficient to satisfy the cravings of maternal affection.  
But a more serious duty devolves upon



sibility until now neglected. You must hear all—all that a guilty woman can divulge to preserve her offspring from a similar destiny of iniquity and woe."

My tongue refused its utterance, as I pressed Mrs. Seymour's emaciated hand to my bursting bosom.

"Circumstances are imperative," resumed she, firmly; "silence would in this instance be but the cruel confirmation of a fatal error. Are your thoughts composed, that I may solicit your undivided attention to a disclosure equally painful, and equally important to us both?"

I trembled as she spoke, for I knew that a mystery yet remained to be unravelled, and instinctively surmised that Lady St. Elme was implicated therein.

"Are you going to mention the misfortunes of my birth?" said I; "the task is unavailing, dear mother; for I know all that concerns my own wretched origin."

"You must be patient with me, Charles," interrupted she, mildly; "the tale may prove

tedious, but the lesson must nevertheless be inculcated. Shall I go on?"

"Proceed, dearest friend," exclaimed I, transfixed with dread, at the impending communication; "I am prepared for every thing reserved for me; I am ready to listen, to submit, and to mourn over a recital which may perhaps annihilate me with its startling import."

"I *had* hoped, dearest Charles, to have been spared this overflowing cup of bitterness; but it is meet that I should drink the draught of humiliation prepared by my own frailty, even unto the very dregs. Oh! there is a thorn rankling in my breast that no human power can extract!"

"The piety of a religious life, my beloved mother, must have poured balm upon your wounded sensibility; grief may be assuaged, and its sorrows mitigated," answered I, almost unconscious of the words falling from my lips.

"But the burning embers of remorse are never to be quenched; not even in the tears of

repentance," rejoined she, with a look that froze me with its portentous meaning.

"Yet, Charles," continued Mrs. Seymour, "do not permit the sad confession I am about to disclose, to influence your kindlier sentiments toward me; let me not be degraded lower in your estimation; for an erring mother requires most comfort in her blighted and desolate condition. The virtuous parent, supported by the conviction of her own integrity, fears not the glance of scorn, the tongue of reproach. Whilst I, standing before you, my son, a self-accused being, would pine under the cold upbraidings of stern morality, and shrink from the retributive justice of merited rebuke which perhaps I may deserve but too well, I crave your pity, your sympathy, to soothe the anguish of a tortured mind."

I drew near to Mrs. Seymour, and silently pressed her hand respectfully to my lips. I felt that I could have prostrated myself before her, and wept at her feet in the overflowing of filial attachment.

“ I once was young,” continued she steadfastly, “ and many persons thought me beautiful. I cannot suppose that I ever possessed the same loveliness of form and feature that so eminently distinguishes Lady St. Elme ; but the baleful consequences of the delusive gift have proved more fatal to me than I humbly trust they ever will to her.

“ My father was a country gentleman named Seymour, having a numerous family to bring forward in the world, and many heavy incumbrances on his property ; he was only able to settle a very small portion of it as a provision for his younger children ; but by way of compensating for our deficiency of fortune, he gave us all the advantages of a finished education, with a number of elegant, but useless accomplishments, which were suited to that high station in society his paternal ambition desired and expected we might probably be called upon to fill. Anxious for the future aggrandizement of his offspring, through the means of matrimonial connexions, our establish-

ment seemed to form at once the object, and I may add the error of his life.

“ My sisters possessed considerable attractions, and were proportionably admired, which gave flattering hopes of their success in the career for which they were trained, and encouraged the speculative visions of our fond but ill-judging parent. Although the hereditary estate was clogged, and almost devoured by debt, the nominal income was large, and by dint of management and loans, appearances were kept up, with tolerable eclat. Many and biting were the sacrifices imposed upon our privacy, in order to gratify the weak pride of ostentation, which has so often destroyed the comfort and respectability of many people similarly situated. Like our more prosperous neighbours, we strove to give fine dinners, and expensive wines; we went to balls, and were dressed in the last style of becoming elegance. Occasionally the elder branches were taken to London, presented at St. James's, and introduced amongst the most fashionable of our patronising acquaintance.

“Two of my sisters married, what is termed exceedingly well ; one having captivated a rich commoner, with a peerage in perspective ; the other having bestowed a hand without a heart on a general of good fortune, and better pedigree. I was then just seventeen, and immediately brought out as next in succession. The expectations of all seemed to centre in me. At this time Lord Esdale’s regiment was quartered in a neighbouring town. We met first at a race-course, and he looked so handsome, and so imposing in the rich cavalry uniform, as his spirited charger pranced gracefully along, that my childish fancy was greatly interested, and I longed to become acquainted with the chivalrous individual who seemed to realise at once the idle dreams of my romantic girlhood. There was a ball in the evening, and to my inexpressible delight the hero of the morning became my partner for the first dance. The acquaintance thus commenced, was soon improved to a degree of intimacy. The officers, as usual, were invited to our house, and were allowed to escort me in

my rides and visits, and to dine with us much oftener than either fatherly prudence, or our straitened means ought to have authorised. Lord Esdale was only a cornet, and had lately joined : he was not more than two or three years older than myself. The result of our frequent meetings may easily be guessed ; a mutual attachment was soon formed, and as the viscount was an heir apparent, he came under the denomination of a good match. But I, Charles, was too young, too artless to be influenced by worldly calculations, and loved your father truly and devotedly for himself alone. During a short period our increasing affection proceeded without incurring particular notice or opposition : my family contributed by every possible means to the encouragement of our growing partiality. Nevertheless, this state of things did not last long ; for the Earl of Glenmore, hearing of what he called his son's foolish entanglement, wrote to the latter in a most peremptory manner, threatening to withdraw his customary allowance, should he persist in forming

such an injudicious connection, the Seymour's being a numerous progeny of portionless belles, eager in the pursuit of matrimonial promotion. This cutting letter produced but little effect on my lover, who vowed that he valued one smile of mine beyond all the Desmond property. But he was young and enthusiastic then, and defied the rational suggestions of conciliatory measures. He proposed marriage, and I, with some little hesitation, acceded to his request. We were determined to brave the indignation of Lord Glenmore, and to prefer poverty with love, to the full and plenteous enjoyment of his favour, when coupled with obedience. Overflowing with the romantic disinterestedness of a first love, Esdale wrote an elaborate epistle, conveying the final decision, assuring the earl that rather than submit to the cold-hearted remonstrances of pecuniary consideration, he preferred risking his future prospects in life, and was resolved on fulfilling the engagement he had contracted.

“The anger of Lord Glenmore may be con-



ceived; he stigmatized myself and family as designing and artful persons, seeking to entrap a youth under age into a most disastrous union. He forthwith addressed my father in the strongest terms, appealing to his honour as a gentleman, and feelings as a parent; and concluded by saying, that not only would he in future discontinue all remittances, but discard his only son from his memory and his affections, publicly proclaiming his solemn prohibition to a marriage, which could only take place in absolute defiance of his express commands.

“These sad tidings alarmed me, and I trembled to persevere in a path that might eventually end not only in my own misery, but in the ruin of one far dearer to me than myself. But I had scarcely time to reflect on the line of conduct most honourable to pursue, when an order from the Horse-guards decided the business by removing Lord Esdale into a regiment on foreign service. I had the option of an elopement; but with more strength of character than I since exhibited, withstood the temptation, and

was despatched by my father on a visit to my sister, Mrs. —, in London. I cannot well describe all that I suffered from this cruel separation; my young heart seemed torn in twain, and the rapid interchange of letters was for some time my sole consolation.

“Our correspondence was carried on with spirit and punctuality; but at length my sister began to object to its frequency. Charles, I was not naturally wilful nor headstrong; a few kind and gentle admonitions from her soon had the effect of rousing me to a sense of the utter hopelessness of my attachment, and the want of feminine dignity implied by its protracted indulgence. Her judicious and well-timed interference produced, not a change in my sentiments, but a degree of calm in their manifestation. A year passed by, and I relinquished all prospect of ever being the wife of Lord Esdale; and I satisfied the scruples of affection by resolving at least to dedicate my future existence to memory and constancy.

“In consequence of my attachment, and the

duties I imagined it entailed upon me, balls and parties had been hitherto avoided; all invitations were strenuously declined, and I considered the common courtesies of society as a sort of infringement on the exclusive devotion I owed to the recollection of my first love. By degrees my sister endeavoured to bring me into company; she assured me that Lord Esdale was not equally absorbed by the remembrance of our former engagement; she even found a newspaper in which his name was conspicuous as having participated in the festivities at the government house, in the Island of ———. This was rather alarming to my self-love, and had considerable weight in my determination of resuming my place in the gay circle of which my sister was a principal ornament. At first I only ventured to appear occasionally at some favourite place of amusement with a select party of approving friends, until my reserve had worn itself out, and the pleasures of a fashionable life crept upon me in all their seductiveness. The general attentions I received

were extremely flattering. Self-satisfaction is an inexhaustible source of amusement, and I soon learnt to prize the vain encomiums of the world. My communications with Lord Esdale gradually became less frequent and less confidential; time and absence completed that disunion which worldly prudence had commenced. Our correspondence, if it did not exactly cease, was changed; my accustomed cheerfulness returned; my personal appearance was restored, and my sister was triumphant.

“ I was soon after introduced to Sir John Neville, a wealthy baronet, lately returned from India with an immense fortune. He was still a fine old man, not more than sixty years of age, of a benign aspect, and pleasing address. Charles, I am now speaking of *one* whom I greatly injured,—of one I ought to have honoured and obeyed, even if my crushed affections did not allow me to love. Pleased with my youth and inexperience, he sought to ingratiate himself with my sister; and from being an old friend of my father's, obtained her permission

to pay his court to me. Sanctioned, or more properly speaking, enforced, as Sir John Neville's addresses were, by the powerful authority of my immediate relatives, it was not easy to decline or evade them ; and the preliminaries of a projected alliance were concluded before I was even consulted.

“ My family were delighted ; and the expression of their joy knew no bounds. Sir John, who had for some years possessed a heavy mortgage on the estate, offered to cancel the debt, and settle half his fortune upon me. It was in vain that I refused and remonstrated, entreated, wept and implored. My tears and supplications were completely overpowered by the varied eloquence of interested parties. Persuasions, threats, injunctions, and commands were alternately put in requisition. My mother urged my compliance by all the ties of duty and filial obedience. My father swore at my obstinacy, and declared that I was positively bent on ruin. My married sisters comforted me with the gorgeous display of jewels,

cashmeres, and all the future glories of a London life. My brothers, who were yet unprovided with a profession, rung the changes of ensigncies, cornetcies, writer and cadet-ships: and the little children told me not to break poor mamma's heart.—Oh, Charles! I yielded to their solicitations . . . . . in an evil hour I became the wife of Sir John Neville . . . . . A cold and joyless union it was.

“I fluttered in the ring of fashion for a season, and punctually discharged my obligations to my parents, by fulfilling to the utmost of my power the sanguine expectations of my craving relatives. At the expiration of twelve months I became the mother of a daughter . . . . . nay, Charles, do not shrink from me yet — that daughter is now . . . . . Viscountess St. Elme! She was not many weeks old, when my first, my only love returned from abroad. We renewed our acquaintance . . . . . our intimacy . . . . . our unhallowed attachment . . . . . what more can I say?” added Mrs. Seymour, pausing from e

tion, whilst I bathed her cold hand with tears.

Again she resumed her eventful narrative. "I abandoned my infant child . . . I forsook my husband's protecting roof to follow the fortunes of Lord Esdale . . . . I do not attempt to offer any palliation; I do not plead my youth, my cheerless marriage, my deep-rooted attachment, the fascinations of your father . . . . I only bow in contrition before the enormity of my own guilt, and hope that my subsequent sufferings may in some degree atone for my transgression.

"For a brief period I was supremely happy with George; but it is wisely ordained that no lawless desire shall be indulged with impunity. Bitter indeed is the lot of her who is seduced by the blandishments of passion; for when love is not supported by mutual esteem, it soon subsides into indifference, which but too frequently degenerates into contempt.

"Sir John Neville, stung by my ingratitude, endeavoured to pursue us in our flight: his efforts were assisted by my father, who exerted

himself in order to discover the place of our concealment. We could find no security or shelter in England. Esdale was greatly involved from extravagance, and the Earl of Glenmore, exasperated with his conduct, refused to pay a single debt; so that, despite the horror of a continental war raging throughout Europe we were compelled to seek refuge in France where we remained as voluntary *detenus* at Chateau Belle Isle. I was pregnant, and became naturally at that period of peril an object of tender solicitude to Lord Esdale. Soon after our arrival you were born, to the ineffable delight of us both. Your infancy formed an epoch of delicious enjoyment; you afforded a constant source of interest and never-failing amusement. For a while we were completely engrossed by your childish development and pleasing caresses; but your father's active disposition at last began to crave more exciting pleasures than the quiet indulgence of domestic affections could yield. You were about five years old, when I commenced reaping the harvest of disappointment.



“Peace was proclaimed; and the English, hitherto confined at home, rushed in flocks to the continent, from whence they had been so long excluded. Esdale, pleased with the prospect of variety, sought to relieve the monotony of our retirement, by inviting and receiving his former dissipated associates. I must draw a veil over the scenes that ensued. Suffice it to say, that their hateful influence and the corruption of example completely estranged him from me.

“It is impossible to detail all the misery and degradation I endured; but surely the most ill-used, the most neglected wife never can suffer the acute torture inflicted upon me. Virtue upholds her votaries; a married female has always some claim upon her husband, until she forfeits her right through wilfulness. There is a never-failing balm in a sense of duty. The injured wife is supported and consoled through the severest trials; but who can minister comfort to the forsaken mistress? what tie has she upon her betrayer? what pity from the world? what solace from

heaven? All is darkness without — and death within. A guilty partner pays the penalty of sin, and receives the wages of remorse.

“ I never could become your father’s wife, as Sir John Neville, from a refinement of jealousy, declined suing for a divorce, as he did not choose to release me from the legal obligations which bound me to him; thus purposely preventing my ever obtaining the only redress, the only boon I could desire. With sadness and dismay I gradually perceived that Lord Esdale had ceased to love me. I found that years of possession had blunted his finer sensibilities. With anguish I discovered that I was no longer the object of his vacillating affections . . . he was unfaithful . . . Oh, Charles! I could scarcely believe the evidence of reason . . . I could not bring myself to harbour unworthy suspicions . . . a doubt even . . . against your father . . . until . . . another was brought to occupy that place in his regard which I had vainly hoped to retain for ever. Many and cruel were the tears his conduct wrung from my bleeding heart. Sin-

ere and frequent were the prayers and supplications addressed to that eternal and retributive power which thus chastened my frailty. My broken spirit, almost yielding to the pressure of additional woe, turned at least from the horrible contamination of companionship. I could not brook farther contumely or insult; with all the agony of contending feelings I tore myself from you, my child, for the blessing your endearments would have afforded were denied: Lord Esdale refused to part from you. That was, indeed, a terrific struggle. We separated.

“ On quitting Chateau Belle Isle, I resumed my maiden name of Seymour, and lived for a series of years in the greatest obscurity, unmolested by the inquiries of my relatives, or by the obtrusiveness of strangers. Through the medium of the attached domestic who still attends me, I heard of my daughter's welfare. She had wealth, rank, accomplishments, and the fatal gift of beauty. She has, fortunately, been spared the pang of witnessing the finger of scorn pointed at her mother, and the voice of

reproach has not been raised to upbraid her with the offences of her parent. She believes—the world believes me to be dead. Long may she remain in ignorance of my existence and my identity. Anastasia is still pure,—still acceptable in the sight of God and man: may she never know the blight of shame, the strength of temptation, nor the weakness of a female heart that has not strength to avert the danger under which it withers like a blasted flower!”

I wept aloud, as my mother proceeded in her story. Oh, the wretchedness, the horror I experienced during her recital! We were yet innocent; but . . . I recoiled from the maddening suggestions of my own fancy.

Mrs. Seymour again continued: “I also heard of you, my dear Charles, with a deep sense of gratitude, blended with maternal pride. I learned that you remained unrivalled in your father’s estimation. I heard also of his death . . . but I could not ask the particulars of an event, which has shed a deeper gloom over my declining years . . . That intelligence was so painful a

blow to my feelings, that I have not yet recovered from its effects... Our disunion will not be of long duration. I know—I feel—that we shall meet again in a purer and a better world.”

I clasped my mother in my arms, but could not find words to convey the harrowing interest her tale inspired. On raising my head, the large shining dial-plate of a French pendulum, on the chimney-piece, met my gaze ; it pointed within a quarter of midnight. I shuddered at the sight ; but immediately decided on seeing Anastasia for the last time at the appointed hour, and wishing to be fully prepared for the fearful explanation, observed, “ Mother, dearest mother, will you never admit your daughter to your presence? Will you never permit her to grace your solitude? ”

“ No, Charles ; it is not right that she should ever know the erring parent who deserted her helpless infancy,” returned Mrs. Seymour.

“ Why do you deny yourself the solace of her society, the pleasure of seeing and speaking

with her? Believe me, that Anastasia will prove worthy of you."

"Worthy of *me*, Charles," interrupted Mrs. Seymour—a blush of shame, or rather of humility, overspreading her worn features:—"If you mean, dear son, to express your sense of Lady St. Elme's amiable qualities, I know already sufficient to satisfy me as to her excellence, and anxiously watched you both, pining for the eventful hour of mutual recognition;—and now that it has arrived, I find it impossible to take advantage of it. No, Charles, no; I never can acknowledge myself to that neglected, injured child. She knows no mother's fostering care; she knows no gentle friend, or vigilant parent: her babyhood was left to struggle through the ills of sickness and helplessness. There were none to guard, none to inculcate the early lesson of growing goodness; her budding youth was left to expand or wither under the cold influence of strangers and hirelings; her innocence, her purity I recked not of. I was not a mother to *her*! No, Charles; ask me not

to face the just, the merited accusations of that ill-used daughter."

"Spare me—spare us both, my dearest Mrs. Seymour," cried I, kissing the tears that furrowed her hollow cheeks; "your children will love — will revere you."

"You, Charles, may," answered my weeping companion; "I have injured you greatly; for I brought you into a world of trouble with the stigma of shame and the brand of misfortune; but I did not leave you willingly, I did not leave you as I left *her*. My girl, my babe, my first-born, was a fragile plant, whose sweetness might attract, and whose feminine delicacy might droop in the broad glare of man's fascinations and the rude contact of the world. I could have lived and died in solitary penitence, had I not been aware that an act of justice was yet required at my hands: I knew that you were an intimate and frequent visitor at Lord St. Elme's; I marked your assiduities, — your constant walks, your conscious looks . . . I trembled at the manifest danger that menaced both

my children . . . But I trust that my warning voice has been exerted in time to save you from the everlasting guilt and misery . . .” She placed her hands before her eyes, whilst, sinking on my knees before her, I endeavoured to calm the terrors of her maternal apprehension, which, however, were unfortunately but too well founded.

Mrs. Seymour appeared completely exhausted, for the recollections of the part in which she had indulged, harrowed up many feelings of regret, that had naturally subsided to the placid current of events in the course of years ; and the recital of her melancholy history had raised up shadowy images that had partially faded in the gloom of distance. I saw it was necessary to consign her to that repose of which she stood so much in need ; and, craving a blessing that was bestowed with equal tenderness and solemnity, left the cottage.

I proceeded slowly in the direction of Lady St. Elme’s beautiful marine residence, which was situated at some distance from



the town. As I walked through the deserted streets, the hollow echoes of my own measured tread sounded intimidation, and my own shadow reflected, lengthened and distorted in the pale moonlight, seemed to menace and oppress me with its immensity. Thus danger never appears so formidable, as at the very moment we escape it. The eventful hour, which neither the impatience of love could accelerate, nor the reluctance of irresolution could retard, was come :—it had been knelled forth from the parish church, and every brazen stroke that fell on the stillness of night, tolled the passing bell of hope and passion. Within a few paces of Anastasia's house, I found the travelling chariot and my servant in readiness. I hastily dismissed the equipage, and felt relieved as it rattled swiftly away, and was soon lost in the obscurity of night. I entered Lady St. Elme's garden ; a lamp was burning in her boudoir ; its soft tremulous light extended to the conservatory adjoining, of which I possessed a key. With agitated hands I applied it to the lock . . . and

in another moment stood in the presence of . . . my sister! She was already prepared for the journey; her features were kindled with excitement; her eyes beamed expectancy; the chord of virtuous resistance was evidently snapped asunder. Anastasia was perfectly composed, and nerved for the fearful step which would at once precipitate her from the place she now occupied, to the low condition of a perjured wife.

“You are not punctual Charles,” cried she, bounding forward with vivacity at my entrance. “It is past twelve.”

“I regret that any delay should have inconvenienced you,” said I, endeavouring to conquer the horror which assailed me.

“I have been so agitated,” answered she; “but it is over now;—the die is cast; I had to contend with many lingering scruples since we parted this morning, — but no matter, let us think no more of past suspense: we will live for each other; the future, — the boundless future is before us.”

I stood speechless, as she spoke, and writhed with instinctive terror, as she threw her beautifully rounded arm over my shoulder ; for I felt as if a serpent was twining itself about me. The very searching intensity of her gaze made me recoil from the bewildering influence of her charms. I pressed my mother's bracelet concealed in my bosom with a convulsive movement : it seemed a talisman against the witchery surrounding me. I knew that procrastination would be attended with the worst consequences, — that it was time to undeceive the frail and lovely creature before me, and accordingly produced it suddenly, to her unutterable astonishment. Her flushed cheek lost its damask hue, and her bright eyes were suffused with tears ; the spell was broken !

“ What does this mean ? ” inquired she, putting forth her ivory wrist encircled by a similar ornament. “ Whence do you possess that precious relic of a mother whom I never saw ? ”

“ Anastasia,” replied I, “ your bracelet con-

tains a miniature, and so does this. Have you never examined the features there delineated?"

"Often, most often," answered the viscountess, displaying an elegant portrait of our mutual parent in her pristine youth and loveliness. "You cannot know how dear this picture is to me,—how fondly I have examined it from year to year, and conjectured with pleased fancy, the being to whom such exquisite features once belonged. I have wept over her untimely fate, and thought with grief on my own early bereavement. I deeply felt my orphaned condition. My father died when I was yet unconscious of the loss then sustained, and my mother did not long survive my birth. This little memorial has been the mute companion of my solitary hours. Oh, how I longed to have known that mother!—that beautiful gentle mother, snatched from my very cradle. How I could have repaid her love had she been spared to bless and guide my infancy and youth. Had *she* lived, Charles! . . ."

"Your mother, Lady St. Elme," interrupted

I, with energy, — “*Your* mother, Anastasia, was also . . . mine !!!”

The viscountess, transfixed with amazement, answered not; her lips quivered far apart, and her countenance became rigid with terror.

“Sister!” continued I, gently, for I did not wish to terrify the unhappy woman, — “dear sister, do not turn from me, your own brother. We must part soon; but do not embitter the present moment. Our separation will be sufficiently painful without adding a single pang.”

“Part! part!” echoed the viscountess, “no, no; I cannot part from you; do not leave me, I implore you; this is a deception, — an error, — an illusion! — Oh God!” — and she burst into a violent flood of tears.

“Alas! Lady St. Elme, the evidence of our senses is before us; there is no doubt, no delusion; the same blood which circulates in your veins also warms the beating heart of Charles Harcourt.”

“What, — who am I? — explain, for Heaven’s

ake,—explain this dreadful mystery!" screamed the viscountess.

"I have explained our relationship, Lady St. Elme," answered I sternly; for I felt almost anger at her incredulity. "The same mother bore us; you are my sister, Anastasia."

"Your sister!" murmured she slowly, as if revolving the possibility in her mind:—"Your sister! and I have loved, encouraged, and tempted you!—Charles, do not crush me, do not deceive me."

"Doubt would be happiness,—beatitude!" cried I in an agony of feeling.

"Let me seek our mutual parent," interrupted she, with energy. Where is our mother? Tell me if she lives. Let me fly for advice,—for protection, from . . . my own weakness," sobbed my companion, evidently oppressed with shame.

"Rather seek a higher protection than that of an earthly parent," said I, hoping to penetrate her mind with a perception of religion. . . . with the truth of my assertion

and do not attempt to solve a mystery equally painful, equally horrible to us both. Henceforward we must live asunder," continued I, scarcely less agitated than herself.

"This is the unnatural conception of a hideous dream!—I am *not* your sister . . . ." cried she, unwilling to admit the frightful supposition.

"Alas, dear sister!" said I, endeavouring to soothe as well as convince, "this is a sad reality; but the crisis of our fate is past. Providence has interposed a pitying arm: our ignorance is at least untainted by crime. We are saved, almost through a miracle; still pure, we have escaped the danger that encompassed us, and let us hope that the awful lesson of this night may not prove fruitless."

"Brother, brother!" echoed Lady St. Elme, "how I have profaned that sacred title. Do not spurn me; do not curse me . . . my brain is on fire . . . Charles, let me kneel, let me pray . . . Oh, let me die!"

"Give me your hand, Anastasia,—that hand

which belongs to a husband ; preserve it spotless . . . . we must part, we must no longer offend God or man, by our unholy desires. But although we never meet again, do not neglect my last, my earnest advice. If another,—a bolder, a happier man than I have been, should presume to love and seek a flattering return, forget not the present eventful interview,—your agonized despair,—and the extremity of our peril. Nay, dearest sister, weep not ; these tears cannot wash out the past. I speak in friendship and in sorrow. Regret is unavailing now, but fearlessly, courageously, resume the path of duty : though cheerless, it leads to peace. Think of me sometimes, not as you were wont to do, but, as the distant and devoted friend, who cherishes the remembrance of your excellences, and would fly from the uttermost quarters of the globe at your command. In the time of need and trouble apply to me without reluctance ; I will serve you faithfully. Your beloved image shall hover near me ; it is enshrined within the sanctuary of my heart



. . . . one kiss, love . . . . one more last fraternal embrace . . . . ”

The viscountess pressed her clay-cold lips to my burning forehead ; I caught her in my arms once more : consciousness had forsaken her. . . . I did not venture to remain another moment in her presence, for the trial was beyond my strength. I could not sustain its continuance, and hastened from the spot, with the sincere hope that the ordeal we both had passed would spare us from future error and temptation. Resigning myself with humility to the inscrutable ways of Heaven, I breathed forth a fervent prayer for the future happiness and preservation of the still adored Anastasia.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Love bears within its breast the very germ  
 Of change ; and how should this be otherwise ?  
 That violent things more quickly find a term  
 Is shewn thro' nature's whole analogies ;  
 And how should the most fierce of all be firm ?  
 Would you have endless lightning in the skies ?

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

She gave  
 In pity to her gentle slave  
 Friendship, esteem, and fair regard,  
 And praise, the poet's best reward.  
 She read his tales, his taste approved,  
 And sung the lays he framed or loved.

SIR W. SCOTT, *Rokeby*.

Ainsi chaque soleil se lève  
 Témoin de nos vœux insensés :  
 Ainsi toujours son cours s'achève  
 En entraînant, comme un vain rêve,  
 Nos vœux déçus et dispersés.

MADAME AIMABLE TASSE.

ON the following morning I was apprised  
 that Lady St. Elme had quitted Hastings ~~for~~  
 London. Thus we separated, and the dream of

passion was dispelled for ever. No farther communication was exchanged between us, except a few short but explanatory lines, written at the suggestion of Mrs. Seymour, calculated to relieve Anastasia's mind from farther doubts or misgivings respecting our relative position, which she received at the moment she was stepping into the carriage that conveyed her rapidly away. All intercourse ceased from that time, until — but anticipations must be avoided.

The loss of her society was a severe stroke; but, however keenly the privation might be felt, I considered the blow which severed us at once from each other, as absolutely necessary to our peace,—to our salvation. We had loved too fondly for the ardent sentiment, so long subsisting between us, to subside to the ordinary temperature of mere friendship: a few short days would not suffice to uproot the habitual tenderness of years, and I determined, if not to forget the viscountess, at least to think of her less, and in a different manner. By leaving Hastings, she had acted with becoming

our consanguinity and its unevery. Any casual meeting which brought us in contact, could only with pain to us both ; it was untrue that we *could* wish to see each other at such events, until time and absence eradicated every vestige of that which we had so criminally induced.

It was not without a struggle that I relinquished Anastasia ; there was no irresolution, of hesitation, when I told myself that fresh duties were imposed on me ; that I was called upon to do my duty to a brother, to a friend ; that the domestic situation claimed my guardianship, although society consider the emancipation as an act of legal emancipation.

such and similar sophistries; indeed St. Elme could only be viewed as the tempter, not the monitor of his wife; and I grieved at the evident perils to which she was doubly exposed by her husband's cruel negligence and her own levity. Sometimes I contemplated on the expediency of writing to her, of warning her against the dangers and seductions by which she was surrounded; but the flow of confidence was stopped by a sense of shame which was insurmountable. A conviction of personal unworthiness arrested my hand; the pen fell from my grasp when endeavouring to trace the language of admonition. Mine was not the arm that could shield her from the impulse of passion,—mine was not the tongue to utter the warnings of morality; but I still hoped most fervently that the lesson we had both experienced, was too awful in itself to require the support of precept: I felt that it was sufficient to check the boldest spirit in the headlong career of vanity and destruction. Thus I was lulled into security by the soothing delusions of

turn to the sterile duties of wedded  
triumphant in the path of virtue.

The alarming increase of Mrs.  
illness, in a great measure directed  
from sentiments of a person  
became uneasy at the rapid change  
appearance, and remained undecided  
propriety of leaving her to resume re-  
sidence in London, until some material  
was observable. I scarcely knew in  
order to conciliate my duty as a son  
absolute necessity of providing  
means of subsistence. I was, however,  
both the difficulty and the delicacy  
suggested by my mother herself, who ex-  
pressed a wish and earnest desire that I should  
reside entirely with her; a proposition

with grief, was only restored, to be again snatched from me by the unrelenting power of death.

Month after month glided on in the constant society of the invalid, whose serenity of temper was unequalled, during her severe and increasing sufferings. I contrived to enliven her solitude with many of those nameless but ever-pleasing attentions which emanate from sincere attachment, and succeeded beyond my most sanguine expectations, in soothing the pangs of that consuming disease, against which, science and mortal ingenuity have fruitlessly exerted their combined skill. Danger, however, was not immediate, and I eagerly caught at the fallacious hopes which were frequently conveyed by my mother's physician, who (although recovery was pronounced impracticable) assured me that care, and climate, might greatly relieve and prolong the valuable existence which caused me so much anxiety.

Oh ! there is something exquisite, something divine, in the gentle interchange of love between parent and child. It partakes of the holy de-

## THE BAR-SINISTER.

n of heaven, and the yielding tenderness  
earth ; it is surely allowed us as a foretaste  
that celestial affection which we are promised  
hereafter.

There existed a fountain of goodness, an  
overflowing gratitude, in Mrs. Seymour's cha-  
racter, that completely rewarded every sacrifice  
demanded of me, and rendered the task of  
attending her one of love and thankfulness ;  
but she was not a selfish invalid ; all the pec-  
vishness of ill-health vanished in the resigna-  
tion of piety. Of her own accord, she fre-  
quently declined my proffered services, believ-  
ing that recreation or change was desirable.  
She suggested also, that my residence with her  
was in no way incompatible with my literary  
avocations : this assurance was particularly  
welcome to me for various reasons, and I was  
soon fortunate in obtaining sufficient business  
with the publishers, to supersede the necessity  
of applying to a more arbitrary profession.  
I wrote to inform Mr. Ashton of the unexpected  
change which had taken place in my arrange-



ments, requesting him to accept my sincere thanks and acknowledgments for past favours, as it was not possible for me to leave Hastings under existing circumstances. Thus I resumed my former pursuits, contributing at the same time to my own gratification and independence; for, much as I loved my mother, I could not consent to remain a burden upon her, and, notwithstanding the near connection subsisting between us, I naturally felt averse to the thoughts of sharing her income as an idler, although I might feel grateful for the kindness she was at all times ready to display.

My correspondence with Cleveland had somewhat languished during the last few months, not from the slightest diminution of regard, but from a reluctance on my part to betray, even in confidence to *him*, the degree of criminality to which my intimacy with Anastasia had arrived; and still hesitated in doubt, as to the propriety of informing him of the actual situation in which we stood regarding each other. After mature deliberation, I considered it advisable to com-

devoting myself exclusively to

He wrote a most friendly epistle, conveying the agree of his having concluded an Messrs. —, which appeared satisfactory to both parties. tioned Lord St. Elme's having a market, to an enormous amount Glenmore being the principal constant companion in every gacy. It was generally feared would ultimately prove the ruin nate viscount, whose infatuation pleasure rendered him an easy acute selfishness of the dissipation mund farther added, that a ren

fashionable ascendancy, — the reigning belle, and the magnet of universal attraction. This intelligence caused me some inquietude; and I put down Cleveland's letter, with unmixed sorrow; a pang of self-accusation seemed to penetrate my heart. Poor feeble-minded Anastasia! she was unable to bear up against the torrent of fascinations which carried her away. The spoiler, too, had been, and had devastated the blooming freshness of her soul: *that* destroyer was . . . her brother! The key-stone of integrity had been shaken; the edifice of truth was undermined. She had been brought to contemplate the possibility of wrong without dread, and she now doubted the absolute necessity of rectitude.

At Mrs. Seymour's urgent request, I sometimes mixed in the society which Hastings afforded, and which I found particularly agreeable, and suited to my inclinations. Miss Vyvian had introduced me to her venerable guardian and his excellent wife, both of whom I have hitherto omitted to describe.

was rather in consideration of his want of  
ment, than from any possibility of  
it himself, although he witnessed that  
of others with the cheerfulness of  
lated mind. His wife was an unaf-  
like woman, partial to retirement, but  
so to Emily, whom she liked to bring  
and "chaperoned" with judgment to  
balls and parties, where she was a  
great favourite. Mrs. Herbert seldom  
her young charge with vigilance, but  
cient confidence in her discretion to  
with a proportionable share of liber-  
these occasions relinquished her re-  
for a quiet rubber, which she continued  
with uninterrupted perseverance; until  
of separation arrived, when, resuming

salutations, withdrew from the circle of which her amiable ward had formed the principal ornament.

Thus I had frequent opportunities of seeing Miss Vyvian, and improving her acquaintance. My mother particularly approved both my visits and attentions, which were sanctioned by her most ardent wishes for my happiness. Indeed, Emily had gained an imperceptible influence over feelings, which until latterly had been scorched and withered by the burning elements of passion, and now began slowly to revive, under the refreshing sweetness of rational affection. She was endowed with a disposition truly calculated to endear the social ties of domestic life, and although she was too young, either to fathom or comprehend the depth of her own newly awakened sensibility, yet her character gained additional interest from the unconscious purity by which it was distinguished.

It is impossible to enter into the nameless details of a progressive courtship, or recount the various stages of incipient attachment, the frequent walks, the rides, and drives, the boating

and the suppressed sigh. 'quent vocabulary of love was ed ; whilst every hour convincibly of Miss Vyvian's excellent regard she long had inspired sentiments of affection and feeling.

No longer dazzled by the personal beauty, or enthralled by witcheries of accomplishment, appreciate the intrinsic worth and qualities, and to exercise a calm Emily was formed for happiness pretty to satisfy the most fastidious without displaying a single selfish lively in her.

I had ever met with. Joined to a high sense of religion, she evinced generosity and elevation of soul, with a disinterestedness of purpose which effectually raised her above her sex, and subjugated my heart, as it subdued my understanding; gradually annihilating in the rapid progress of true love, every trace of the fierce delirium once excited by the seductive perfections of the beautiful Lady St. Elme.

My mother, whose opinion I held in the highest estimation, often hinted that a matrimonial connection with Miss Vyvian would be extremely advantageous on many accounts; and I perceived with satisfaction, that the favourable idea universally entertained of Emily's disposition and acquirements, had reached Mrs. Seymour through a less partial channel than myself; but although I had many flattering reasons to believe that she was inclined to encourage my addresses, I felt considerable reluctance on the occasion. Much as I respected and loved her, I literally had nothing to offer. My obscurity, my poverty,

see,—to know Miss Vyvian, wa  
and cherish her; but to make  
was a piece of audacity I hardly  
contemplate; and I went on from  
in the routine of habit, without de  
important step which I felt woul  
future welfare or misery.

My mother, at this period, co  
worldly arrangements, and besto  
parative competency, by settlin  
fortune upon me. This emanated  
her savings;—she had with intuit  
relinquished the very handsome  
which she was legally entitled as  
Sir John Neville, and merely rec  
annuity which enabled her to li  
and lay by a portion, which, in



a profession, but would scarcely be enough to share with an elegant girl of refined ideas, and habits of affluence. Besides which, there was a still greater obstacle: she had not (to my knowledge) been informed of my illegitimacy;—to her I was still Charles Harcourt, the friend of Mrs. Seymour, who was remaining at Hastings for the re-establishment of his health, which had been impaired from the over exertion of attending the death-bed of a younger brother.

Many and painful were the disclosures required ere I could aspire to success. I feared the result,—and questioned if the high-minded Emily could for a moment regard me, if acquainted with the misfortune of my birth. Could she bring herself to share the lot of a man without property or patronage,—without family, fortune, or weight in the social scale,—who had struggled hard with adversity in its most degrading form, and had already quaffed unsparingly from the bitter cup of poverty?

Despite these prudential considerations, I still nourished a secret, silent, confidence in her

sincerity, and flattered myself that the preference with which she honoured me, might overbalance the numerous disadvantages against which I was compelled to contend. I watched her assiduously, with a sentiment of pain that was not divested of a certain sweetness. I perceived a gradual change in her deportment. She was no longer the gay, the mirthful creature she once had been; the transition was remarkable. For on Lady St. Elme's immediate departure, she certainly had appeared to great advantage: it seemed as if an overpowering influence had been withdrawn, and she at length shone forth in her native colours.

I knew not to what charm I might attribute the radiant smile, the sparkling eye, the flushed cheek, and the joyous step. She was the image of hope,—of hope such as the young alone can cherish before they have experienced the cold breath of disappointment, and the hollowness of success. But the bloom, the elasticity which had created so much admiration, visibly faded and declined; Emily became

contemplative, abstracted, almost sorrowful. A pensive shade pervaded her words, her looks, her actions; her very studies assumed a melancholy cast. All her former pursuits were in a degree abandoned; her favourite authors were neglected. Emily was in love. Shakspeare, Scott, and the didactic poets were thrown aside; whilst H. K. White, Mrs. Hemans, and L. E. L. were eagerly resorted to. She was romantic; and the wild coruscations of Victor Hugo's eccentric genius, which on former occasions her good sense had condemned for an exaggerated sensibility, were now perused with indulgence and complacency. But above all, she delighted in the tender gloom and christian meditations of the harmonious De la Martine: his verse seemed the very echo of her own heart, and always graced her work-table. Various pages, and the most approved passages were marked by her pencil, and the following imitation, evidently composed by Miss Vyvian herself, fell into my hands accidentally. I trust the fair authoress will forgive the larceny; but it was

The breeze sighed through the leafy brake,  
The world sunk into sweet repose,  
As the bright star of evening rose.

A mild but solemn voice the stillness broke,  
An aged man drew nigh, and thus he spoke :

“ Father of heaven, great, eternal Power !  
Receive my prayer, as with the closing hour  
My soul bows down before thy glorious throne,  
And with repentance wears thine altar stone ;  
My youth was spent in futile joys ; in vain  
My manhood toiled for wealth (that useless gain)  
And now declining age can only see  
The hopeless past ! the grave !! eternity !!!  
Is life a boon, when each succeeding year  
Revolving brings increase of worldly care ?  
Is life a boon, when every earthly joy  
Eludes the grasp, or is but to destroy ?  
Is life a boon, when all we love must die,  
And sinful man doubts immortality ?  
When all our sorrows, hopes and inmost fears  
Close in the grave, that yawns for human tears.”

He ceas'd ; the moon shone o'er the lake,  
The breeze sigh'd through the leafy brake,

Of life, the watchful seraph linger'd near,  
 And death's sad messenger was also there ;  
 Both heard the sage, both met his wilder'd sight,  
 One pensive, dark, the other, joyous bright.

"Ungrateful mortal," said the Source of Life ;  
 "I placed thee here, — what means this endless strife ?  
 Ye call on death — Have ye forgot the days  
 Of youth, of hope, the brilliant summer rays  
 In which ye basked ; and manhood's nobler cares, —  
 The kind old age that with affection shares  
 The milder pleasures of surrounding youth ?"

"Pause there," said death, who held the wand of truth,  
 And leant on hope, whilst pointing to the sky, —  
 "Pause there, 'tis time th' ungrateful man should die.  
 In me ye view weak mortals' firmest friend,  
 Their dread in life, but constant in the end :  
 The grave ye fear, — that dark mysterious doom  
 Conceals a kingdom in the christian's tomb, —  
 That grave alone can soothe the aching breast, —  
 That grave alone can give the wand'rer rest, —  
 That grave alone can succour human woes, —  
 That grave alone can give the heart repose ;  
 It leads to immortality, — to bliss !!!  
 The worm may revel ! christian, what of this ?  
 Discard thy clay ; why linger to repine ?  
 Throw off the dross, — mortal, become divine."

The sage knelt down, — one prayer to heaven address'd,  
 Bow'd his meek head, and found eternal rest.

The moon-beams trembled on the lake,  
 The breeze sigh'd through the leafy brake,  
 The world sunk into sweet repose,  
 The spirit to its Maker rose.

Without being particularly fine, these lines

pleased me; they appeared to breathe a spirit of serious thoughtfulness, even a religious enthusiasm, which could hardly be expected from one so young. I knew Emily possessed the elements of deep feeling; and that exalted tenderness of disposition, which often accompanies strong attachment, was only dormant in her bosom, merely requiring the promethean touch of sympathy to expand in its most enchanting fulness.

Our mutual confidence daily increased. I communicated my own literary productions for her inspection; her delicacy of taste frequently refined my more masculine compositions; it seemed as if my works were purified under the polish of her censure, and glowed with the brightness of her charming imagination.

We often spent a considerable portion of the morning together; for I liked to construct the web of fiction under her influence, which always seemed to infuse fresh spirit into my occupation. Sometimes as I sat reading, writing, or perhaps commenting on the unfinished

manuscript before me, she would stay at her needle, the rich embroidery frame affording her small and nimble fingers ample employment for the exercise of dexterity. There she would remain intently occupied, with her graceful head bent forward in a beautiful attitude of contemplation, seemingly absorbed in the important combinations of silken flowers, wreathes, posies, true-lovers' knots; at other times her feminine industry would be assiduously directed to the snow-white perfections of cambric work, with its soft satiny raised buds and blossoms, interspersed with transparent open stitches and inserted net, in which most intricate branch of female handicraft, she evinced persevering ingenuity. Thus I became tolerably initiated in the arcana of the boudoir, and took the favourable opportunity of consulting the attentive sempstress on my own lucubrations, treasuring her observations, as to epithets, terminations,—above all, catastrophies. A woman knows so well *how it ought to end!* men may write better, but women feel more; they possess an intuitive

sentiment of the pathetic, which our sterner natures are denied. A woman may err in judgment, which is but too frequently the case, yet they never fail in an acute perception of what in music is called, *la note sensible*, or in finding the secret touch which awakens the spring of feeling.

Emily was a gentle, yet a masterly critic; she was gifted with a clearness of judgment surprising in one so artless. The pure taste was free alike from the taints of mannerism and the epidemic of fashion. She never estimated a new work by the standard of established authority, but by the infallible test of natural sensibility and discrimination. She certainly had been admirably educated,—perhaps not in the general acceptation of accomplishment; for even with a lover's partiality, I have already been obliged to acknowledge that she was not exactly perfected in those seductive arts which are more calculated to adorn a woman for the precincts of a harem, than to steel her mind to encounter the difficulties of domestic life with



becoming energy. She was superior to the every-day accomplishments of a boarding-school; she was essentially rational, and possessed those high qualifications, which, though not always called into action by the minor course of events, are nevertheless required to bear up against the various trials allotted to the best and wisest. Convinced by close observation, that her noble and generous disposition had sufficiently developed itself, to satisfy the misgivings I had harboured as to the durability of the sentiment she manifested, I prepared to make a candid statement of my whole situation, and the avowal of my ardent affection. Knowing that she was fully apprised of my poverty, I trusted that the encouragement I had received would be sufficient testimony of her high-mindedness, and that she might be induced to look over the irreparable misfortune of my origin, as I had often remarked, that the advantages of rank and prosperity appeared to have but little weight in her estimation.

Thus nerved for the issue, I resolved to

trifle no more with a heart I longed to claim by the nearest of ties,—to risk the declaration of my love, and request permission to address Mr. Herbert in form, to whom I resolved to confide every circumstance concerning myself with the utmost candour; thus appearing in an honourable, if not an advantageous light.

With the firm determination of bringing matters to a conclusion, I resolved on joining an evening party given by Mrs. Herbert, on the occasion of Miss Vyvian's birth-day. My mother was somewhat better, and was in the drawing-room when I descended from the minutæ of the toilet. She kindly nodded maternal approbation as she sprinkled my handkerchief with her own favourite *extrait de mille fleurs*.

I remained for some moments conversing with her, and ventured to hint my intentions, and the hopes on which I rested. She listened attentively, and looked in my face with a sweet but doubtful expression of countenance; and with a deep sigh observed, "Be not too sanguine."

I wished her farewell, and in return received an assurance of her best wishes, and hastened to the scene of festivity.

It was rather late when I entered the principal apartment, which was considerably crowded, and I had some difficulty in penetrating the dense mass of well-dressed people that encumbered the door and communications between the rooms. At last I discovered Mrs. Herbert, surrounded with a host of visitors. She kindly described the direction in which I was likely to find Miss Vyvian, and obeying the suggestion, I soon beheld the object of my search. She was engaged in earnest and agitated conversation with . . . . . the Earl of Glenmore !

Her expressive face was pale as monumental marble ; her large speaking eyes were raised in doubtful investigation towards his lordship, whose cold sarcastic glance fell . . . on me ! I returned his gaze fiercely ; but it was impossible to remain another minute in the assembly. I felt as if every tongue was ready to accuse

me,—as if every hand was pointed in scorn, and every look was one of scrutiny and contempt. I retired instantly, to chew the cud of bitter disappointment and additional mortification. I slept not during the night, and on the following day a letter was sent to me by a private messenger, of which I offer a faithful transcript :

“ SIR,

“ I have been informed by public report, and various animadversions, that you are presuming to pay your addresses to Miss Vyvian, who is my cousin by birth, and to whom I am nominated guardian conjointly with Mr. Herbert. In that capacity I now request that you will forthwith desist from your intrusive attentions, to which neither of her legal protectors will ever be induced to give consent. I have issued my peremptory commands (which will be ably supported by the friendly exertions of my colleague) that my ward shall no longer be subject to the impertinent familiarity of a base-born adventurer. In future, your visits to Miss Vyvian

will be superfluous, and declined accordingly, in compliance with the strict injunctions of

“GLENMORE.”

“*Hastings*, 182—.”

I was thunderstruck at this unlooked for communication. Emily,—the amiable, the gentle Emily, was the relative, the ward of Augustus! My happiness was dependent on the will or rather the caprice of my cruel foe! I was completely in his clutches; but the natural surprise elicited by this unexpected discovery was soon merged in feelings of a different sort. The cutting insolence of this detestable epistle roused sentiments of indignation, which had been successfully combated during my stay with Mrs. Seymour. The first impulse of outraged honour, was to seek redress, the only redress that could allay the thirst of vengeance within me; but on deliberation, my better reason proved the inexpediency of such a measure, which was neither calculated to advance me in the opinion of others, nor in the affections of Emily.

The Earl of Glenmore, her relative and lawful guardian, in thus prohibiting all intimacy and acquaintance between us, was ostensibly fulfilling the strict obligations imposed by his responsible situation ; and in so doing, he was supported not only by prejudices, but by the opinion of the world. He was authorized, or I should say, enjoined by law to exert his prerogative in the protection of his ward ; and the invidious motives which really actuated his conduct, were completely screened by circumstances from public observation. It is impossible to paint the growing anguish of soul with which I viewed my actual position, and the clouded future. Foiled in my dearest hopes, crushed in the very sight of the woman in whose estimation I had sought to raise myself, I execrated Glenmore from the very bottom of my heart ; I hated him with redoubled virulence, for the very reason that was likely to render his interference the more plausible. Hitherto, his injuries had been the evident result of undisguised animosity ; but in this instance he

appeared to advantage, as the champion of an innocent girl, the bold defender of her independence, stepping forward most opportunely to repel the insidious designs of an artful and penniless adventurer. I *knew*, I fully appreciated the rancour of his enmity ; but others did not, and gave him credit for a consistency, of which, on my conscience, I believed him to be incapable. Thus the unfortunate combination of facts which precluded my calling upon him for the satisfaction due to a gentleman, produced a consequent reaction in my mind.

Had Augustus really shown himself in all the naked malevolence of purpose,—had I been able to challenge him, to measure arms with him, to contend inch by inch, to brand him with the stamp of his own villany in the face of society, I should have suffered less. The whelming torrent of anger, of concentrated hatred would have had vent, and my bursting soul have found relief. But to endure—silently, placidly, to endure the blow levelled at me, the barbed

arrow of contempt rankling in the wound it had inflicted, was more than I could bear.

Poverty, sorrow, and constant humiliation, I had calmly submitted to: philosophy had enabled me to support my personal dignity under these dispensations; but to bow meekly under the accumulated insults of Lord Glenmore, was beyond my forbearance; — insults, too, which received fresh poignancy from the envenomed source whence they flowed. It was, however, quite manifest that until Miss Vyvian attained her majority, every prospect, even of seeing or speaking to her, must be abandoned. I could not descend to the mean, skulking subterfuge of a clandestine lover; I could not take an unfair advantage of the youth and partiality of the interesting Emily. I loved her too reverently to harbour such unworthy thoughts, and conceived that I should deserve to relinquish every claim upon the noble heart I sought to win, by endeavouring to obtain either promise or engagement, until her matured judg-



ment and legal emancipation allowed her to make an unbiassed selection.

To remain at Hastings under such trying circumstances was impossible; and, however I might regret the vicinity of Emily, and thereby forfeit the distant possibility of meeting her, yet I could not calmly consign myself to obloquy and insult; and determined on quitting the place without hesitation or delay: although I was particularly anxious to avoid harassing my mother's feelings by detailing the events under which I smarted, I, nevertheless, resolved on inducing her to accompany my retreat. Indeed, she had rendered the task more easy by frequently expressing a desire to visit the classic land of Italy, believing that the change from an insulated to a continental situation would prove beneficial to her declining health. It, therefore, remained with me to direct her wishes once more to the point in question, skilfully concealing the grief of disappointment which oppressed me.

I succeeded in my endeavours;—no sooner delicately hinting the failure of my hopes with Miss Vyvian, and my ideas on the subject of our speedy removal from Hastings, than she eagerly caught the proposed plan, observing with her usual considerate kindness, that her sole motive in remaining so long stationary, had been the fear of distressing and thwarting my views with respect to a permanent establishment. This welcome intelligence sufficed: I lost not another moment in expediting the necessary preparations for our immediate departure.

## CHAPTER XV.

With thee my bark I'll swiftly go,  
Athwart the foaming brine ;  
Nor care what land thou bearest me to,  
So not again to mine.

LORD BYRON, *Childe Harold*.

Pourtant j'aime une rive  
Où jamais des hivers  
Le souffle froid n'arrive  
Par des vitraux ouverts.

VICTOR HUGO.

Man, by the battle's hour immortalized,  
May fall, yet leaves his name to living song,  
But of forsaken woman's countless tears  
What reck's the after world ?

*The Iphigenia of* GOETHE.

OUR arrangements were soon completed ; but previous to quitting Hastings, I despatched the following letter to Miss Vyvian :

“I know not in what language to address you, Emily ! I did venture to love, to hope !

but a power from whose authority there is no appeal at present, has bade me to despair. I ask nothing of you, Emily, having already presumed too far. The portionless, illegitimate Harcourt could not dare to pour forth the ardour of his soul; yet, Emily, I did love you truly, and if I had worlds to share with you I should be proud to lay them at your feet. I had nothing but the purest affection to offer, and until now I never ventured to reveal the sentiment you inspired.

“I am commanded to desist from seeing you; and by obeying this cruel prohibition I relinquish the only pleasure of existence.

“You will hear my name branded with contumely, and my misfortunes canvassed with harshness. Condemn me not, Emily, but think kindly of one, *who loved not wisely, but too well.*

“CHARLES HARCOURT.”

“*Hastings, 182—.*”

I waited day after day, still nourishing a last lingering hope that Emily might send me an

answer, expressive of her sentiments. In vain I watched with the impatient vigilance and fond self-delusion of a man, who feels that he has risked his last chance. I could not accuse Miss Vyvian of caprice, but sometimes feared that I had been led to place too favourable a construction on her condescensions. Her present silence forbade farther correspondence. I was therefore compelled to leave England without the sad satisfaction of knowing her feelings and future determination in my regard, or receiving a single token of that friendship I had prized beyond all things.

I bade adieu to Hastings with deep regret. Its localities were associated with delightful and touching recollections. We proceeded to London, where we remained but a few days, in order to settle our affairs. Cleveland was gone into Devonshire, — indeed it was a time of the year, when the great capital is supposed to be deserted, by its more fashionable inhabitants; so we were spared the pain of meeting acquaintance.

In these days of steam and macadamized roads, a journey by land or water affords little interest; and mine was embittered by circumstances of a peculiar nature; places and people met my outward sense, but nothing conveyed a distinct impression to my brain. Memory held despotic sway, and allowed no new image to intrude on the shrine consecrated to the recollection of Emily.

The green fields and white cliffs of England disappeared from my view, and the waving corn-fields, and rich vineyards of France burst in thick luxuriance upon me,—both were unheeded. My heart prayed on itself; I was an outcast from home, and a stranger abroad.

We travelled on by slow and easy stages, to the garden of the south, through the valleys and over the mountains, by the stupendous glacier, and rumbling avalanche. Alike, we viewed the alpine snows, and alpine verdure: we floated on the lakes, we slept in the châteaux, and we both began to feel that benefit which

locomotion is sure to confer, even on the deep-seated sorrows of the mind.

We entered Italy by the passage of the Simplon, with the intention of wintering in Naples. As I do not intend writing either a tour or a journal, it is needless to enter into minute descriptions of the various objects of interesting remark that attracted our notice. To my personal annoyance, we punctually went through the regular evolutions of sight-seeing in a most wearisome routine, under the especial convoy of the most tedious of all ciceroni. How I loathed the sickening monotony of each succeeding day! The aspect of beauty may be obscured, by an injudicious association. What an immense quantity of trash has been written about the blue skies of Italy! no other given spot on the globe has ever furnished so copious a supply of well-printed, hot-pressed "octavos." If the remote inhabitants of other climes remain ignorant of its present and past excellences, it must be their own fault; there are books enough on the subject; yet how little either

the glorious sublimities of nature or the triumphant perfection of art, are felt or appreciated by the scribbling votaries of twaddle ! They see, they write ; but they do not comprehend the vast intensity of sentiment that a residence in Italy must inspire.

Florence detained us some time : my mother's refined taste found ample scope for improvement and observation ; whilst on the contrary, my tortured mind took no part in the bright scenes around me. I felt but little gratification in the contemplation of statues, pictures, and palaces, which never yet could calm the fierce tumult of an agitated mind. The works of God, the sublimities of nature alone, have the sacred privilege of soothing human affliction ; the creations of man, the creations of genius, however exquisite, fail to touch the secret spring of rooted grief. The artist is an ephemeral being like ourselves ; the produce of his ingenuity is equally perishable, and crumbles under the iron hand of time ; but the wild foaming ocean, the primeval rocks that bid defiance to its



bounding waves, may speak to the soul a language of heavenly consolation and peace, by raising our thoughts to a more expanded sphere than our own actual existence.

Rome I found more congenial to my feelings ; —the ruins of other days, the dust of ages, the mouldering temples once consecrated to the gorgeous ceremonies of a heathen creed, —now extirpated from off the face of the earth. The relics of former dynasties, of emperors, kings and patriots, were in accordance with the sombre colour of my ideas. No where is human instability more conspicuous, than among the ruins of its former grandeur ; those arches, pillars and pyramids, erected to commemorate the occurrence of events which might otherwise be questioned, and whose influence on the destiny of mankind is no longer appreciated, or scarcely remembered.

We arrived at Naples about the commencement of the carnival, and resolved on remaining there until the ensuing spring should allow of our penetrating the valley of Tyrol, which

as yet has not been profaned by the incursions of general travellers. Tyrol retains its pristine freshness ; and from its topographical position is beyond the reach of every-day tourists.

I had several letters of introduction to the principal families in Naples. One, amongst others, to the Count Della . . . . which had been kindly forwarded by the Clevelands. We were invited forthwith. My mother, as usual, declined entering into any species of gaiety ; but as Edmund mentioned the count as a particular friend of his father, I could scarcely refuse the proffered civility ; besides, I was anxious to observe the manners of the Italians, in their own houses. In this, however, I was disappointed. La Contessa received company every week ; her *conversazioni* were delightfully pleasant, and to them I was not only admitted, but most graciously welcomed. However, beyond these evenings set apart for social intercourse, I never penetrated into the domestic circles.

Naples suited my melancholy humour. There

was a constant movement and excitement in the rumbling volcano, a mysterious grandeur that philosophers may solve, but will always strike awe, even to an unreflective mind. It is a strange and fearful sight to observe the great renovator of nature at its work,—to be, as it were, in the vast laboratory, and watch the throes and struggles which give birth to new elements. It shows the evanescence of worldly things, and worldly interests, worldly passions, and worldly affections. We pass like ephemeral beings, and the stupendous fabric we inhabit, still continues the endless travail of reproduction.

Vesuvius is a type of the great changes that work throughout the universe! the subterranean cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the fruitful plantations, already flourishing on their ruins, is but the diminished representation of the abyss of time that swallows empires and produces worlds!

The winter was now fast resolving into spring, and I began to participate in the plea-

sures Naples afforded. My spirits had in a degree recovered their tone; and, although far from happy, at least, I was not unsocial or morose. The circle generally assembled in the saloon of Count Della —— was particularly agreeable and suited to my taste. I usually attended the weekly reunions of the Contessa, where I found refined conversation on interesting topics, frequently diversified by music, or even dancing, as the season and weather permitted. On one of those occasions, my attention was accidentally attracted by the observations of a gentleman deeply engaged in rather a loud and energetic discussion, the subject of which was the religious vocation of a lady about to take the veil at the celebrated convent del Annunziata on the following afternoon.

Never having witnessed such a ceremony, I addressed him requesting to know the hour at which it would take place. He replied politely to my question, adding, that Signora Olympia was young, beautiful, and accomplished; that the sacrifice was perfectly voluntary on her part,—

indeed, her friends and relatives had strenuously opposed it for a length of time. I was curious to know the reason of her embracing a monastic life, and testified my wish to be acquainted with the particulars of her history, being confident it must be interesting.

My Neapolitan friend seemed willing to oblige me, and began by observing, in the first place, that he was a friend to the lady in question,—not to say a sincere admirer of her talents and virtues. “She is,” continued he, “lovely beyond expression; at least, she was so; for when last I saw her, grief had wasted her form, and dimmed the lustre of her beauty; yet still there was a charm in her melancholy. What she lost in brilliancy was scarcely perceived, such was the powerful interest she inspired. I have seen her, Signor, courted, followed, applauded, idolized; she possessed the talent of improvisation to the highest degree. Amongst the inhabitants of the north, this extraordinary gift is rarely cultivated, but with us it is highly prized; the terminations in our language are

harmonious ; many are even similar. Euphony is seductive to a musical ear, and the warmth of our southern imaginations leads us to the higher regions of poetry. But," said he, "I am digressing, and you are impatient to hear Olympia's story.

"About three years ago, a young Russian officer visited Naples ; he was introduced to Olympia in this very apartment ; I was present at the time ; he was a personal friend of the Count Della . . . I never shall forget his astonishment on hearing her recite some lines on Greece ; she was peculiarly graceful, and I suppose the Russian never beheld such loveliness before. Besides, she was quite the reverse of a northern beauty,—she was all soul, all intellect ; no insipid smiles or unmeaning phrases. Her complexion was darkened with the Italian sun, but then there was a fine rich glow that sometimes mantled on her cheek, far, *far* preferable to all the alabaster beauties in the world . . . . Pardon me, Signor, if I am carried beyond bounds in my description of the angelic

Olympia. I was myself one of her numerous admirers; my warmth is, I hope excusable.

“The young Russian, whose name was Carlowitz, fell desperately in love with her, and well he might. He visited at her father’s house, and had frequent opportunities of seeing her; she was not blind to his merit, which was very great, though he was a Russian; yet I often wondered at Olympia preferring a blue-eyed, fair haired foreigner to an Italian, who must have naturally more advantages, and be in every sense more captivating in manners, than the cold, reserved, and straight-laced Muscovite; for you must know, Signor Inglese, he always affected to wear his uniform.

“Well, then, to our utter astonishment, she received his addresses, which could not possibly be half so flattering as the attentions of her own countryman, for instead of devoting himself to her in public, he used to stand leaning on his sword, in some distant part of the chamber, fixing his eyes on her (for he seldom deigned to cast a single glance on any one else), whilst

every other man in the room was endeavouring to please the Signora with their assiduities.

“The Neapolitan ladies admired Carlowitz at first, but he was too cold for them; so they ended by calling him an icicle, and then a Russian bear, because he used to wear a magnificent fur cloak, which they all coveted; but he was so ungallant as to turn a deaf ear to their various hints, and secretly presented it to Olympia, who had not even expressed a wish for it.

“One evening the Russian and the Signora were leaning on the terrace, talking of love and sentiment, gazing at the moon, which was rising above the promontory, just as you see it now, Signor, from this balcony: Carlowitz held Olympia’s hand in one of his, and with the other he pointed out the beauties of our justly-celebrated bay. The face of nature was calm and serene; the moonbeams sported on the rippling waves; now and then the sound of a distant lute stole gently on the senses; nothing but the softest music interrupted the magic still-



ness. It was an hour consecrated to love and constancy. As the Signora and Carlowitz were thus engaged, a messenger arrived with official despatches, ordering him to join his regiment, which was marching directly towards the Turkish frontier. Olympia fainted in his arms. He consigned her to her parents, and taking one fond, last embrace, quitted Naples.

“The tender Olympia felt his absence keenly. Those hours she had formerly passed in company, were now spent in solitude. She occasionally heard from him, but still that even increased her uneasiness. She dedicated whole days to prayer: in the silence of night she knelt at the foot of the altar, imploring Heaven for his safety.

“Of a fervent and enthusiastic disposition, she became the victim of superstition. A thousand dark forebodings hovered round her . . . . At length the dreadful news came which threatened to overwhelm the nobler faculties of her mind. Christianity was triumphant; Russia had conquered; but Carlowitz had fallen . . . .”

I thought I saw a tear twinkling in my friend's dark eye ; but he dashed it away, and continued : “ I never saw the Signora but once since that event, which laid waste her warm and ardent heart. As a friend I gained admission to her presence a few months ago ; she was then preparing for the noviciate. I found her alone : she rose at my entrance, and said with a faint, very faint smile, ‘ You are come to see me : it is kind of you ; but I do not like company, having a companion here.’

“ She showed me the Russian's picture, which she had sketched from memory. As I gazed on the likeness, I could not help looking towards herself. How she was altered ! her cheek wan ; and her long dark tresses which she was wont to take such pride in, fell loose on her shoulders ; there was a touching melancholy in her look that struck me to the heart. I could not speak : I really felt too much.

“ ‘ In a few months,’ said she, ‘ I intend taking the veil, and bid the gay delusive world farewell for ever. I once courted its smiles ; I once loved

the world; but, oh! how changed,' added she, putting her hand to her heart. 'My hopes are now all centred in heaven. There was a time when the world possessed every attraction; but the fairy illusions are fled; my happiness is wrecked, he is gone' . . . . and she cast her beautiful eyes upwards. I observed the silent tear steal down her pensive cheek,—'but,' said she, 'we shall meet again; the time is not far distant,—I feel it, I know it,—I shall soon, very soon, rejoin my beloved in the grave!'

"Pardon me, signor; I fear I tire you," said my Italian friend. "This is a sad gloomy tale: you know it now, and if disposed to accompany me to the church of the convent *Del Annunziata*, to-morrow, I shall be happy to attend you."

Powerfully interested in the fate of Olympia, I was anxious to behold the young and lovely woman, who was going to consign herself to a living death.

I accompanied the signor, and entered the church just as the vespers had concluded. It was already crowded to excess: all the friends

and relations of Olympia were there. I placed myself as near the altar as I could, and silently awaited the ceremony ; I did not remain long in suspense. The drapery which concealed the nuns from public view was drawn aside, and I beheld her arrayed in a bridal dress of surpassing splendour. Need I add that she was beautiful beyond description. . . . . I heard her pronounce the irrevocable vow . . . . and the world closed on her for ever !

The crowd dispersed : I lingered in the church until the shades of evening fell deeper on the tessellated pavement, and the arcades, lost in perspective, were only seen through the dim medium of twilight. The sun had long ceased to project his golden rays on the painted windows, whose variegated glass, cast no prismatic reflections on surrounding objects. All was sinking into obscurity, silence, and night. A few pious females, yet prostrate in the chapel of the Virgin, murmured the remaining strophes of the "*Angelus Domini*;" the tapers which hitherto had shed a flickering light on some

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dark pictures, sunk low in their sockets ; the steps of the beadle were less frequent ; the people had gradually disappeared ; I was alone, and sought to meditate. A church is indeed the epitome of life : — our birth is registered there in baptism ; our destiny in marriage ; and our annihilation in death. If walls could speak, how many tales of human misery might be detailed. The vows, that yet seemed to re-echo through the vaulted roof were wrung from an agonized and bleeding breast ! How many sacrifices of a similar nature, had been offered at that very altar ? How many weary heads had bowed before that shrine, and found everlasting repose in the mouldering receptacle of decay beneath ? The destiny of man is suffering, and his solace is oblivion !

## CHAPTER XVI.

Sur la plage sonore, où la mer de Sorrente  
 Deroule ses flots bleux aux pied de l'oranger,  
 Il est près du sentier, sous la haie odorante,  
 Une pierre petite étroite indifferente  
 Aux pas distraits de l'étranger.

La giroflée y cache un nom sous ses gerbes . .  
 . . . . .  
 Mais pourquoi m'entraîner vers ces scènes passés ?  
 Laissons le vent gémir et le flot murmurer,  
 Revenez ! revenez ! oh, mes tristes pensées,  
 Je veux rêver et non pleurer.  
 DE LA MARTINE.

Most subject is the fattest soil to weeds ;  
 And he, the nobler image of my youth,  
 Is overspread with them ; therefore, my grief  
 Stretches itself beyond the hour of death.  
 SHAKESPEARE.

Nulla reparabilis arte  
 Lessa pudicitia est.

WE continued residing peacefully at Naples,  
 which furnished us with many sources of  
 amusement, and abundant food for scientific

and philosophical investigation. The various gaieties of the corso and carnival, San Carlos, and the court, which generally attract the notice of English travellers, were neither calculated to suit our tastes, nor the peculiar circumstances in which we happened to be placed ; pleasures were not our object, we came in quest of health and change of scene. The genial warmth of this ever delicious climate proved extremely favourable to my mother's debilitated constitution, which raised hopes of relief, if not of a perfect recovery. A considerable amelioration had taken place since our arrival, and I observed, that by judicious care and management, we might yet succeed in prolonging the valuable existence of one who became more dear to me every day.

When my mother's strength appeared equal to the exertion, and permitted her to leave her apartment without risk, we sometimes ventured either in a light open carriage, or small boat, such as are commonly used in the bay of

Naples, and passed a large portion of our time in charming excursions to the richly varied environs. We went to Salerno and Amalfi, Baïa and Pouzzoli; every interesting spot celebrated in history or in poetry alternately claimed our notice. The splendid Vesuvius was frequently visited; I observed its changeful aspects at different hours; sometimes in the bright glare of sunshine, a slight silvery vapour hanging like a veil of gossamer on its awful summit, as if to screen its mysterious agency from the penetration of day; and again I witnessed the grand phenomenon, as it poured forth lurid flashes of preternatural light, illuminating the deep ravines and jutting rocks during the gloom of midnight; whilst the purple waters of the Mediterranean reflected the gorgeous spectacle in the silent solemnity of surrounding darkness. The solfatara, removed some miles from the active volcano, particularly challenges observation, as its occult movements seem to correspond so strangely with those of the far-famed mountain; their fearful operations are curiously



connected, and a subterranean communication evidently exists between them.

It is wonderful, that the city of Naples has for so many centuries withstood these combined terrors, whilst the neighbouring towns and villages have repeatedly been swept away in the dread convulsions of nature, and as often restored by the persevering industry of the scattered inhabitants, who appear singularly attached to that burning soil from whence they have been so constantly expelled by the warring elements. There is scarcely a single hamlet in the immediate vicinity of Vesuvius that does not bear some marks of its awful visitations, or has not been rebuilt, and as rapidly destroyed within the memory of man.

I could not possibly remain long in this land of enchantment, without feeling a desire to visit the beautiful and highly romantic island of Procita, which is peopled only by a few fishermen and their families. It boasts of much picturesque scenery, well worthy of attention. Formerly a Grecian colony, the inhabitants still

preserve the antique character in their original language, their truly classical costume, their manner, and very peculiar style of physiognomy;—the pure Greek outline may be distinctly traced in the sun-burnt features of the maidens of Procita. This lovely and sequestered spot has been most felicitously illustrated by the elegant and polished works of the Viscount de St. Forbins, equally celebrated as an author and a painter.\*

Day after day was thus devoted to the pleasing and never-failing task of seeing and admiring the charming environs of Naples. The ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii, the gem-like Isles that stud the distant horizon, the village of Portici, the Torre del Greco, and the grotto of Pausilippo,—all became interesting objects of research, until, fatigued with the panoramic

\* Le Viscount de St. Forbins, was the distinguished artist who completed the picture of Inez di Castro, crowned by Peter the Justificator, after death, which furnished Madame de Genlis with the subject of a most pleasing romance. St. Forbins painted a fine landscape of Vesuvius in a state of eruption, including the destruction of Pliny, the elder. He also wrote the popular novel of "Charles Barrimore."

succession of interesting objects, we gladly exchanged the brilliancy of the city for the delightful residence of Castelmare, which is the extreme point of the crescent, forming the most beautiful bay in Europe. Here many persons resort, especially invalids, for the purpose of inhaling the pure air, which is literally impregnated with the balmy sweetness of thickly-spreading orange-groves, that mingle their delicious fragrance with the soft breeze, fanning the sparkling waves, whose gentle breath diffuses freshness and health on the sunny shores of the Mediterranean.

A large and distinguished circle of the British aristocracy enliven this truly fashionable spot with their presence and festivities. Many prefer it to Naples, or any of the adjacent towns; for it is considered to combine the advantages of all; but I did not yield to the various temptations their society offered, and pertinaciously avoided the contact of all acquaintance, rejecting every opportunity either of meeting or being introduced to fellow-country-

men, whose intimacy I should have been proud to cultivate under more propitious circumstances ; but I feared the result of farther mortification and exposure. Limiting, therefore, my visits and communications to those agreeable and interesting Italians whose animated conversation afforded me considerable amusement; but with the exception of the few foreign circles I was occasionally induced to frequent, I seldom quitted my mother. I lived for her only . . . Or, I should rather say, that we lived for each other,—beyond the reach of those who had injured, and far from the sympathy of those who loved us : our happiness completely blended in one common interest.

Thus time, immutable in its changeful influence, slowly but surely commenced the soothing task of consolation, and gradually restored us from the severe effects of cutting and repeated humiliation. As our mutual misfortunes had been produced, our mutual attachment was strengthened by the bond of circumstances that united us: we were linked by nature, by sorrow,

and by the extraordinary combination of events which had brought us so singularly together. As long as my mother was spared, I felt there still existed a motive, a mainspring of action : I felt that a being depended upon me for succour and comfort ; the very exertion required, stimulated the energies of my character, and roused me from the wretched contemplation of self. I had yet to learn what it was to be *alone*, and to encounter once more the anguish and horror of a death-bed scene.

Cleveland's letters were kind and frequent ; they formed a sort of epoch in the tenor of our placid existence. Of late his communications had assumed a most cheerful and even sprightly tone, and were chiefly filled with the excellences of a young lady, to whom he was about to surrender his liberty. He had for a considerable period been ardently attached to the daughter of an old friend, and from all accounts his betrothed appeared in every respect educated to ensure his permanent happiness. Both families had given their hearty and un-

qualified consent to the projected marriage, and from its very commencement had encouraged the growing partiality of the interested parties, which was founded on the solid basis of confidence, esteem, and equality of position, so desirable, and yet so little attended to, in most unions. The ceremony, that was intended to be strictly private, had been merely delayed by the necessary legal preparation of settlements, always provokingly tedious in their formal technicalities, but more especially so in the case of Cleveland, where a strong affection rendered the lovers impatient under the tiresome impediment, which alone suspended their felicity.

I could not remain indifferent to any occurrence that was fraught with so much importance to the future welfare and prosperity of my best friend; the very perspective of his happiness gave me unfeigned satisfaction, although at the same time it caused me to revert again to the painful obliquity of my own position. Our destinies had been differently cast, comparisons were both unkind and unavailing: yet I could

not avoid feeling the darkness of my own lot when contrasted with the radiant images that would soon adorn his. The blessings of wedded life were in store for him, an amiable and beloved spouse would embellish the cheerful retirement of his home, a numerous circle of congratulating relatives would crowd round his table, a duteous offspring would adorn his union, and inherit the honourable name transmitted in legitimate purity from the patriarchal tree.

I was not base enough to envy Cleveland; but the wild impatient aspirings of my stubborn breast unfitted me for the obscurity of my humbled station. I did not bear up with becoming dignity against the trials that had hitherto embittered my fate. No! I did *not* envy Cleveland; but I perceived the immense, the immeasurable distance between us, perhaps for the first time, and with all the acuteness of a disappointed man. Edmund had obtained, or rather possessed, the very treasures to which I had so vainly aspired, and to which I had been reluctantly compelled to resign all prospect, — re-

maining a nameless and desolate outcast, with none to interest my melancholy and unshackled freedom.

It was impossible to hope that Emily could ever be mine ;—she whose gentle nature would have shed sunshine on the path of adversity I was doomed to traverse, was denied me, and had perhaps already forgotten the unfortunate and devoted Harcourt, who buried alike his unabated love and his sorrows in voluntary exile.

It is not prosperity, it is not affluence, it is not power, rank, or distinction, which constitute the charm, although they may be mistaken as the aim, of life : all these may be relinquished without a sigh, contemplated without desire, and lost without regret. Ambition may be the object, but love is the polar star that guides and brightens as it shines upon our track ; it is the soft exchange of social intercourse, the tenderness of domestic affections, the numberless ties and intricacies of civilization, that sweeten the inevitable bitterness of those disappointments that surely await even



the best and happiest; relieving the aching breast of half its oppressive burden. The most agonizing pangs of sorrow are divested of their sting, when the anguish is shared by the sympathy of others.

In the midst of adversity, the beaming countenance of a sincere friend reflects comfort and condolence; innocence and guileless mirth are pictured in the blythe faces of sportive children; whilst the wedded partner, — the wife, — that dear depository of all our inmost sentiments and secret thoughts, possesses in herself that potent talisman, which softens anger, represses the rising indignation, administers the gentle admonition, and quells the fierce tumult of contention ere it bursts forth in unmitigated fury.

Cleveland stood on the threshold of enjoyment: all the manifold blessings which haunted my imagination with their cruel mockery were within his grasp, . . . . and had eluded mine.

Of Emily I heard or knew nothing, if I except some trifling information received from

Edmund, to whom I had written a detailed account of the whole affair. His answer was laconic, and merely stated that the lady to whom he was engaged had formerly been at school with an Emily Vyvian, by all accounts probably the same amiable girl of whom I spoke so enthusiastically. He strongly recommended me to desist from all farther attempts at establishing a correspondence with the ward and kinswoman of Lord Glenmore, (for reasons he would hereafter explain,) until she should have attained her majority. — “Then,” added he, “her judgment will have acquired maturity, she will be enabled to appreciate the strength of her own attachment, and value of your constancy, (if constant you remain?) from what we understand of Miss Vyvian’s character she is not a person likely to change her sentiments; but I will not proceed, concluding that you are already quite sufficiently convinced of her excellent qualities without my adding fuel to fire by farther encomiums.”

About a month after receiving the intimation

of Cleveland's approaching nuptials, and becoming impatient for the pleasing announcement of the wished-for event, I returned anxiously from my accustomed walk, in the expectation of finding letters containing the latest intelligence awaiting me, as the English mail had arrived. I entered the furnished hotel in which we had hired apartments, and found the saloon, usually occupied by my mother untenanted, but a slight noise within induced me to open the door of her bed-chamber, which as is often the case in continental houses, communicated with the external room. I beheld her extended apparently deprived of life, — her eyes closed, and a livid pallor pervading her thin and sharpened lineaments. A surgeon was seeking to bleed her in the arm, from whence he could only succeed in extracting a reluctant stream, which ouzed slowly drop by drop, whilst her faithful attendant was fruitlessly striving to restore suspended animation.

I rushed to the bed-side with unspeakable dismay; my beloved parent continued senseless,

and I perceived with surprise that a crumpled newspaper was grasped convulsively in her clenched hand, from whence it could not possibly be extricated. A considerable time elapsed ere consciousness returned. Her glazed eyes opened languidly, and fixed a piercing glance on me; but it was many hours before her exhausted strength would admit of conversation. However, the cause of her illness was completely elucidated by the following disgusting paragraph, which appeared in one of the public journals, and sufficiently explained the mystery of my mother's lamentable situation.

“ELOPEMENT IN HIGH LIFE.

“The beautiful and fascinating Viscountess St. E—e has, it is rumoured, accepted the protection of the fashionable Earl of G——e, who has already attained considerable notoriety in the sporting world. The injured husband has absconded; but reasons of a less private nature are ascribed to his disappearance, which is in no way connected with the *démarche* of

his lovely lady." It would be impossible to paint the affliction we both endured from this barbarous statement of circumstances which so nearly involved our closest interests: my mother's agony of mind and bitterness of soul could neither admit of condolence nor relief. A long and circumstantial letter from Edmund removed every vestige of doubt, confirming and expounding the wretched fragment of intelligence inflicted through the vulgar jargon of a fashionable morning paper.

Fearing the dangerous consequences which might naturally result from an untimely or unguarded communication, my friend, with his usual considerate foresight, had written to break the cruel tidings with delicate caution; but my mother unfortunately had seized the papers on their delivery, feeling a sort of eager curiosity to examine their contents, which can be easily understood by those who have lived for any portion of time at a distance from their native land, when the most insignificant accident assumes importance from its connection with the

home we have left behind. The perusal on this occasion nearly proved fatal, and it was with difficulty my mother became sufficiently composed to learn the particulars of her daughter's disgrace.

It appeared clearly that the viscount had been seriously implicated in a pecuniary transaction, which so materially involved his character, that he was compelled to fly from impending ruin and dishonour. A whelming crisis had absolutely engulfed his whole property, and his affairs were in such a state of desperate confusion, that very little could be done either in the form of liquidation or dividend. All his landed possessions were in course of being sold, and Anastasia was left by her truly culpable husband, both friendless and penniless, homeless, and almost hopeless. Things were thus at extremity when Augustus came forward with seeming disinterestedness, and proffered his valuable services to the distressed viscountess, who, in the midst of accumulated difficulties and temptations, surrendered herself irrevocably

a yielding victim to the artful representations of a villanous seducer.

My mother struggled against this heavy blow with a dying effort. The sins of her youth were sorely visited on her increasing infirmities, under which, in the course of nature, she was rapidly sinking; but the wretched conviction that her own errors and omissions had mainly influenced the fate of her daughter, added another and keener pang: it was the last stroke her evil destiny could inflict; it was impossible long to support the conflict. From that moment her days were numbered. In vain I sought to raise her drooping spirits, and dispel the fearful gloom of her dying bed: she felt that the responsibility of a parent had been imposed upon her by Providence, and that she had proved unequal to the awful duty assigned her.

“ Charles,” would she say, as I watched with mortal apprehension the expiring embers of her lingering existence, — “ this is more than I expected. My frailty is punished, not beyond my desert, but beyond my strength. I had prayed

—I had hoped to have died in peace; but it was not so ordained.”

“Calm yourself, dearest mother,” cried I, throwing myself on my knees before her; “this agitation will kill you,—it will kill *me*!”

“Oh, my son! when I look back at the events of my past life, and contemplate the unutterable misery my conduct has entailed on all around,—the glorious gifts of God thrown recklessly aside,—what a scene of desolation rises before me!”

“Cease, oh cease, these cruel self-upbraidings!” exclaimed I, weeping from a similar sense of error: “a life of penitence must have fully atoned for a moment of weakness. Dearest Mrs. Seymour, be merciful to . . . yourself!”

“No; nothing can compensate for the past save the unwearied clemency of Heaven,” interrupted she with sadness: “let me remember the days of my iniquity; let me think of Anastasia, once a pretty, smiling, little innocent, clinging for succour to a mother’s bosom,—that bosom which closed against the most touching



appeal of infant helplessness. Yes, — I abandoned her . . . without an effort, — I afforded no tender shelter to my babe, — her little cries, her childish woes obtained no redress, — no pity . . . and now . . . she is . . . perjured . . . debased . . . like . . . her guilty mother! — Dim images of the dead seem to rise up in judgment against me! . . . they haunt . . . they oppress me with a threatening aspect . . . save me! . . . oh, save me! . . . from divine wrath!" — And my frantic parent sought refuge from the horrors of delirium in the arms of her wretched offspring.

"Nelville! injured Nelville! you are avenged. Why do you menace me thus? Are you come to reproach me? — Hide me . . . Charles, I cannot bear *his* frown!" — Thus murmured the agonized sufferer during a frightful paroxysm of despair.

"No, no! you are come to forgive my transgression . . . to accept the oblation of a broken-heart . . . your Anastasia has left your old age to pine in neglect, and she was . . . your daughter . . . she has proved ungrateful . . . oh, pardon

her for my sake as you pardoned me ! I have the token of peace and forgiveness you wrote before you died . . . I keep it here with me," exclaimed Mrs. Seymour, producing indeed the last epistle of her husband, which was blotted and effaced from the tears that had been plentifully showered upon it . . .

"Virtuous, kind old man ! smile upon me,—in pity look down upon my misery . . . Charles, this precious document must be buried with me ; promise obedience to my dying injunctions."

I pledged my word, and endeavoured to soothe her evident excitement with repeated assurances of duty and affection.

"I do not deserve much from you, my son," continued she more coherently ; "yet if consolation is allowed me on this earth, it is that which your filial attachment affords . . . Oh ! it is sweet to believe that amid the devastation I have created,—amid the ruins which surrounds me, that one heart responds to mine,—one being hovers near me,—one tongue has never reviled

me, but shed the balm of comfort on the rankling wounds of remorse. I have still a child to soothe my pain, to close my eyes . . . yet, I had once another babe . . . my first-born . . . where is she? . . . my cherub girl! . . . Oh I remember . . . all . . . all . . . all, and she has fallen too!"

Again Mrs. Seymour's language became confused and unintelligible. She preserved occasional snatches of reason, but the master-chord was broken.

"Mother, beloved mother, live for me, for your devoted Charles!" cried I, clasping her burning hand within mine. "Spare me the torture of seeing — of hearing you thus; we will yet pass days of peace . . . of prayer!"

"Prayer! yes, prayer!" echoed she in hoarse murmurs: "prayer may relieve me from the terrors of conscience."

I perceived that nothing but the consolatory promises of religion were of the slightest avail. Her anguish of mind baffled every other argument my solicitude could suggest. She constantly spoke of the past, and it was not in my

power to abstract her thoughts from the deep-worn channel of lasting regret. Once she reverted to the object of her early love,—to my father; and while speaking of him she was perfectly collected.

“Do you think,” observed she with solemnity, “that at such a moment as the present, Lord Esdale can be obliterated from my memory? Do you think I have forgotten *him*? was I not the cause of his errors? Had I pursued the straight line he would not have deviated from it; had I opposed resistance to the strength of my own passions, he would not have followed the career of earthly gratification: he might have eschewed the course of evil, he might... have married... virtuously, honourably. I blighted the expectations of his manhood by my weakness... he saw my frailty, and the prospect of success encouraged the lawless pursuit... I yielded to temptation; I first shared his wayward disregard towards the sacred obligations of married life. I have crushed all that was dear to me in my down-

fall, — even you, Charles, have not escaped. Humbled and insulted, branded with the contumely of society, without a name, without a lineage, I leave you now a living monument of my disgrace, and heir to my misfortunes.”

The wild accents of my mother's phrenzy struck daggers to my heart; she was evidently dying, and a prophetic spirit seemed to agitate her. The fatality which had attended her extended itself to her daughter; and amid the whirlwind of passion in which our united destinies had been involved, the sting of self-reproach had not left me free from pain. I felt that I had in the course of our intimacy, materially estranged Anastasia from a sense of duty, — that I had originally tempted her from innocence and virtue, — that I was the Mephistopheles of my own sister. It was in vain I sought to deceive myself with plausible sophistries; it was in vain that I made excuses to the never-erring accusations of the inward monitor; and although I sedulously acquitted myself of any deliberate plan of seduction, I

knew that I had gained an ascendancy over her weakness,—that I had familiarized her with glowing images of illicit love,—that I had taken advantage of her position, teaching her to suffer the approaches of man's unqualified admiration, and to listen to the voice of preference, without shrinking from the inevitable consequences. Even at Hastings, when it appeared as if an especial intervention had taken place in our favour, I had neither exerted the privileges nor the influence of a brother to shield her from the obvious perils and innumerable temptations that encompassed her. With fatal and confiding blindness she was abandoned to the dangers of vanity, and the wilfulness of her husband; not a single effort was made by me to snatch a frail and lovely woman from impending destruction. Fresh interests, fresh desires had been excited, and the claims of kindred, the voice of prudence, were merged in the new and all-powerful passion for Emily Vyvian.

I felt that I deserved censure and blame,

sincerely did I regret my own culpable neglect in omitting those salutary warnings of experience and affection, at a period when the happiest results might have crowned my endeavours. Glenmore's ablest and most systematic combinations would have proved abortive, had I not prepared the way, levelled all obstacles, thrown down the barriers of principle, and undermined those delicate scruples which otherwise would have preserved her inviolate from the corruption of example, and the contamination of a libertine.

My poor mother's closing agonies were cruelly protracted, to the last awful moment. She continued at intervals keenly sensible of both the present and the past. With the mild forbearance of christianity she restrained every unkind word, every uncharitable construction, against him who had injured us all so deeply. Not a sentence inconsistent with the purest piety escaped her lips; every expression was replete with contrite humility, and the same exemplary penitence marked her last illness, as

it had done the concluding years of her stormy life.

My feelings towards Augustus acquired addition stimulus. Had it been possible to hate him more than I did already, his conduct to my sister would have proved sufficient aliment for increased aversion ; but the dreary scene before me was of a nature to counteract the pride of heart which hitherto assailed me ; it was calculated to subdue the evil propensities of humanity, not excite them. Mrs. Seymour, with the courageous firmness of a martyr, raised my thoughts to a better sphere ; her pious exhortations abstracted my ideas from the fierce contention of worldly strife, to the sad reality of approaching death, and soothing efficacy of heavenly love.

The tide of life was ebbing fast ; the history of her remaining days would fill a melancholy, but not a useless volume. To be brief,—bodily and mental torture combined hastened, the long feared catastrophe . . . my mother died.

I consigned her beloved remains to an obscure



grave, in the land of strangers, where none could know her error, or commiserate her sorrows. A lonely and beautiful spot on the bright shores of the Mediterranean was selected for her last resting place; the tomb was unostentatious as the lowly tenant of decay within; a weeping willow bends its drooping verdure over the pure white marble slab, which simply records the name and age of

“MARIA SEYMOUR.”

END OF VOL. I.



**THE BAR-SINISTER.**

**VOL. II.**



THE  
BAR-SINISTER,

OR

MEMOIRS OF AN ILLEGITIMATE.

*Founded on Facts.*

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Tout marche, et le hasard corrige le hasard.

VICTOR HUGO, *Hernani*.

Thy name!—Who art thou?

Didier!

Didier!—Didier of what?

Didier of . . . nothing!!

VICTOR HUGO, *Marion de Lorme*, (free trans.)

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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1836.



# THE BAR-SINISTER.

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## CHAPTER I.

Notandi sunt tibi mores.

HORACE.

He reached the castellated Rhine.  
Ye glorious Gothic scenes ! how much ye strike  
All phantasies, not even excepting mine.  
A grey wall, a green ruin, rusty pike,  
Make my soul pass the equinoctial line,  
Between the present and past worlds, and hover  
Upon their airy confine half seas over.

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

With grave  
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed  
A pillar of state : deep on his front engraven  
Deliberation sat and public care,  
And princely counsel in his face yet shone  
Majestic.

MILTON.

THE English who travel on the Continent in  
the luxurious yet uninteresting privacy of their

own equipage, dragged *ad libitum*, by the restive and ill-concerted movements of five or six *chevaux de poste*, know nothing of the countries through which they circulate, except loose conjectures that may be deduced from the protracted clatter of a foreign causeway, the occasional vibrating of the postillion's whip, or the diversified waltzes, galloppes, and Tyroliennes that issue, according to circumstances, from Mynheer's bugle ; the measure, or *tempo di marcia*, being generally regulated by the pace required,—soft music indicating a reverse state of road ; the approach towards a hill may be apprehended when the charming *allegro*, that hitherto accompanied so pleasingly along the plain, gradually decreases to a soothing *adagio*. The travellers I alluded to might as well be rolling through Hyde Park as ascending the Simplon ; their gaze usually wanders from the drab linings of their own well suspended landau, to the tri-coloured intricacies of Reichards' maps, from whence they calculate, with hungry or sleepy impatience, the actual



distance of the next post, and when arrived at the goal of their daily peregrination, call for a *chambre particulière*, and consign themselves to the exhilarating pleasures of continental wines, and the more substantial *chefs d'œuvres* (*hors d'œuvres*, I mean) of a French artiste. On the next morning they follow, with canine fidelity, the hurried steps of a *valet de place*, or the less ostentatious *commissionnaire*, who conducts them, as may be, to view a church, a picture, a statue, or the eternal *Hotel de Ville*. After a cursory glance, which satisfies as to the actual tangibility of the object on record, they start forward to the next place of consequence, perfectly convinced that during the journey they have inspected every thing worthy of notice.

Commend me to the humbler traveller who wends his unobtrusive, but not unobservant steps by the chance conveyance of diligence, vetturini, steam-boat, or *coche d'eau*; whose frugal meal is merrily dispatched at the numerous and motley board of *table d'hôte*; who finds his "murky way," in solitary independence,

through narrow streets, crooked alleys, and when arrived at the *point de reserche*, feels the delight and claims the merit of discovery. Besides, there is something so peculiarly gratifying to individual freedom in having a way of one's own ; a deviation from the hacknied routine of sight-seeing, would be a relief in these days of exclusiveness and *ennui* ;—who would like to be considered as following the beaten path of former tourists ?

It was in this manner I commenced my journey from Naples, which possessed nothing *now* to occupy or interest me. I was a solitary creature, and hoped to find amusement with what the French appropriately term “distrac-tion” in change. It was the only thing calculated to relieve the wretched sense of loneliness and bereavement that seemed to weigh down my spirits. My mother's death, added to the miserable defalcation of Anastasia, had nearly paralysed my moral energies, and my medical adviser strongly recommended travel, even pedestrianism, as the only means of restoring

equanimity to a mind oppressed by recollection.

I directed my course towards Venice, which appeared so lugubrious, that I soon hastened from the insufferable dulness of its "prisons and palaces," and proceeded into the romantic depths of the Tyrol, which amply recompence the lover of the sublime and picturesque. I got on to Inspruck, Augsbourg, and Schaffhausen, picking up information and amusement as I went, but my heart was too full to appreciate much of the beautiful scenery which presented itself on every side. The falls of the Rhine, however, awakened a sense of grandeur and of awe which roused me in some degree from the all-absorbing stupor that seemed to involve the mental powers. By dint of directing my fixed attention towards external objects, at length I began to conquer the lethargy in which I was plunged, and on arriving at Strasbourg, decided on my *feuille de route*. The Rhine may be said to commence its noble career at Heidelberg, and claims its pre-eminence amongst the beau-

tiful if not the most navigable of European rivers.

Hesse Darmstadt seems to rival Frankfort (on the Main) in the estimation of travellers, — both are splendid towns, both are distinguished by noble architecture and fine streets; but Hesse Darmstadt is celebrated for its exquisite opera, in which Sontag had formerly a permanent engagement. The orchestra is under the especial care of the reigning prince, who prefers leading a band of harmonized instrumentalists, to governing the discordant elements of diplomacy through the interminable intricacies of a German cabinet. To be more succinct; his serene highness plays first fiddle at the opera! Quere, would he occupy a part equally prominent in the scale of royalty, as in the scale of sound?

My intention was, to reach the capital of Belgium before winter, which I proposed passing in Paris; but autumn had scarcely variegated the woodland scene, as yet the green leaves had only here and there assumed the

rich and warm shade of brown, that sheds such increased lustre on the landscape; so there remained ample time to allow of my wandering slowly by the Rhine, lingering on those spots which promised most food for investigation. To attempt a description of the different and beautiful scenery with which I was so frequently gratified during my journey, would at best be but labour in vain. Nothing is so difficult as to impress others with a correct notion of what we ourselves have seen.

Few places ever in reality accord with the ideas imparted by description; the humblest sketch issued by the redolent lithographic press, is preferable to the most finished and highly wrought passages of first-rate tourists, which tell of hills, vales, rocks, glens, trees, and waters, in "thick confusion," yet, however dexterously the substantives may be strung together, it produces no distinct image to the mind, and becomes a mere amalgamation of nouns.

By way of varying my mode of travelling,

I walked from Frankfort to Wisbaden ; it was but a short distance for an active man, and the road lay through a most interesting country, teeming with " corn and wine." In the same unostentatious manner I proceeded through the celebrated Reingaut, and the far-famed vineyard of Hockheimer, to Mayence, from whence the river is seen to the greatest possible advantage. Although pedestrianism seemed most calculated to facilitate both inquiry and observation, yet it appeared that the usual and most convenient method of conveyance from Mayence to the ancient city of Cologne, would be *viâ* steam ; and I accordingly embarked on board the " Prins Wilhelm," which was highly ornamented, with a splendid flag waving gracefully at the stern, announcing thereby to all beholders, that passengers of note were expected.

In a few moments, just as the bell pealed forth the third and last signal for departure, a numerous party appeared, and I was informed that the family of Prince Metternich had arrived. The whole circle came from

Johannisberg, and were proceeding to the baths of Emms. I soon recognized the roving eye and green cravat of the Austrian ambassador at the British Court, but could not select the man, in appearance, capable of winding the magnates of the congress round his finger and thumb. I vainly searched the group with a glance of conjectural scrutiny, hoping to discover *him* who ought to be Prince Metternich. There was a host of diplomatists,—a sort of galaxy of stars, crosses, garters, and cordon bleux in the crowd of black-coated, green-coated, brown-coated, and blue-coated men, that were escorting the Countess Ingelheimer and the two princesses\*, the youngest of whom was peculiarly interesting, and excited a strong and touching feeling of sympathy in consequence of her being afflicted with lameness, which imperfection she concealed with timid grace.

A gentleman in brown (I like to be particular with respect to *colours*) detached himself

\* The Princess Hermine, and her sister, lately married to the Count Sandor.—EDITOR.

from the assemblage, and approaching the spot where I was standing, entered into general conversation with that courteous politeness which is frequently the concomitant either of high rank or an exalted mind. This encouraged my asking him to point out the celebrated statesman.

The Count D'Appony, Austrian ambassador at the Court of France, to whom I had thus addressed myself, replied with a smile to my inquiries, and requesting I would remain stationary for an instant, stepped forward and rejoined the party for a moment. He was eclipsed in the circle, from which he quickly emerged, leaning on the arm of the prince of "diplomacy."

The minister was not particularly tall; but the elegant proportions of his figure were yet untouched by time, although I believe his highness had then completed the grand climacteric. His movements were regulated by courtly ease, and a scrupulous attention to personal appearance was evinced in the



most trifling details of a neat but very simple toilet: his pale, high forehead, seemed formed for vast speculation, and a thin sprinkling of white hair conveyed rather an impression of experience than of age. An aquiline nose gave his profile the characteristic prominence of the Duke of Wellington, but the resemblance did not extend beyond: the eagle eye and quick piercing glance of the military hero could not be traced in the pale grey orbs of the diplomatist: endowed with feline softness, they were shaded by heavy drooping lids, which peculiarity, not exactly amounting to obliquity of vision, had certainly the advantage of concealing the passing thought, which is so often betrayed in the prompt interchange of looks. Yet the exterior of his highness was extremely prepossessing, and presented a general appearance more calculated to grace a court, than to direct the complicated machinery of international government at the ministerial congress of the assembled majesty of Europe.

The young Count de Litta, a Milanese noble attached to the household of the prince, commenced sketching a series of views as we swiftly glided down the Rhine. He seemed an excellent draughtsman; and seizing the most striking objects as they were gradually revealed to our admiration by the winding sinuosities of the river, conveyed them to his album with astonishing rapidity. The minister watched the artist's progress with approving smiles and words of kind encouragement. He planned a temporary awning to shade the Count de Litta from the ardour of the sun, and assisted even in fixing the handle of an umbrella in the collar of his coat, saying, with unaffected good nature, "Bravo, bravo! my dear Litta; that is excellent, charmingly sketched; now let us settle this apparatus, or you will be broiled. In my younger days I was fond of scrawling landscapes from nature, and wandered about the country with a stick and umbrella thus contrived to keep off the heat, with tolerable success." On concluding

these words, his highness handed the drawings to the ladies, and then completed the task of establishing equilibrium between light and shade. The young secretary smiled with grateful acknowledgments at the pleasing condescensions of his princely patron, which I was informed were extended with discriminating kindness to the most humble members of his establishment.

The ladies had opened their reticules, and produced their needle-work : it was braidwork, I remember, and the first I had ever seen of the sort. Prince Swartzenburg, who appeared most assiduous in his attentions, and realized the *beau idéal* of what an *attaché* ought to be, was busily employed picking up bobbins, cutting thread, finding scissors, selecting the favourite *nuance* by its newest and most refined designation, producing for the assistance of the illustrious sempstresses the necessary implements of construction by them required. He was at least a useful appendage, but from his notoriety in a certain amorous adventure, I

was prepared to see a very captivating individual. . . . . Fair frequenters of Almack's! . . . ye all know Prince Swartzenburg! and surely do not,—cannot think him handsome! His eyes are large and dark, I acknowledge, but not expressive: his nose . . . out upon such a nose! it *may* do for a premier, but not for an Adonis. The days for whisker and moustache are over with the days of chivalry; alas! poor Swartzenburg! if you were now to appear on the fashionable horizon of England, your fate would probably be less enviable than it once was; for on board the “Prins Wilhelm,” the day I had the honour of sharing your serene society, you were silent and dull, tall and awkward; but, as the arch-counsellor of kings shrewdly observed, every allowance should be made for Swartzenburg's lacerated sensibilities.

Without being intrusive, I soon found myself engaged in conversation with the whole party: there was something so original in being thus brought into immediate contact with Prince

Metternich, that I eagerly embraced the opportunity so agreeably afforded, of studying his character, as much as time and circumstances would admit.

He was gifted with an amazing facility of thought and expression: his capacious mind seemed to luxuriate in its own richness. He playfully dwelt on various subjects:—literature, fine arts, mechanics, theatricals, music, fashions, every thing but... politics. With enthusiastic admiration, he pointed out the beauties of the Rhine to the notice of every person on board: well versed in the real history of its fruitful banks, he fondly lingered over the recital of the wild traditions and poetic legends that are affixed to the romantic ruins which crown the vine-clothed mountains. From the famed fortress of Erenbreitchstein, to the sonorous echoes of Lorli,—from the castle of The Brothers to the insulated Mouse Tower,—all were known and had been inspected by the Prince, who was never more pleased than when dilating on this subject, except on the occasion of extolling the

flavour and growth of his own unparalleled Johannisberg; and in discussing the unimpeachable merits of that celebrated vine and its glorious exhilarating produce, from the culture of the plant to the pleasing blue bottle and long cork appropriated to the juice of this favourite grape, he was more than communicative. This was his highness's hobby, which was rendered very apparent, when, with surprise, I found him entering into a familiar disquisition with an itinerant wine-dealer, who had edged himself close to the Austrian premier, and with tolerable assurance asked him, from curiosity, how many hogsheads his excellency's vineyards might produce on an average in the course of the year, and the profits arising therefrom. His highness answered with alacrity, and turning to me, observed,

“ As you are a traveller, I recommend your visiting my place at Johannisberg: it is really worth seeing. The view from the house is particularly striking, and very extensive. On your return to Mayence, come up the mountain some

day before three o'clock : I shall then have the pleasure of doing the honours myself, and detaining you to dinner. I promise you shall taste some excellent wine !”

To this gracious invitation I could only bow my confused thanks and acknowledgments ; but as I listened to the unaffected and cheerful conversation of the prince, I could scarcely believe that the charming and lively companion who seemed intent only on the amusements and luxuries of life, was the arch-contriver of European despotism at the Congress of Vienna.

I collected a vast number of original anecdotes in the course of the day ; but not having taken notes at the time, it would be impossible to convey them, preserving the pristine freshness with which his highness delivered them. His talents appeared most versatile. He alternately addressed the company in four different languages. His English and French were faultless ; also the Italian, which he spoke with great distinctness of utterance. German, being the national tongue, was the usual medium of com-

munication with the subordinate classes; but I was further informed that the prince was obliged to transact business also in Latin and Bohemian—in short, that by habit and nature he was a perfect linguist.

It was with great regret I found that we had arrived at the end of the voyage, which was enlivened through the day by the most pleasing society ever congregated on board a steamer; but a period was put to the rotatory motion of the wheels that propelled us, and this concluded my acquaintance with the circle of assembled diplomatists, which finally terminated by our shaking hands *à l'Anglaise*, and expressing a mutual wish that we might meet again.

I have been tempted to give this trifling sketch of Prince Metternich, in consequence of the interest naturally excited by even a casual knowledge of such a celebrated character. A clever and brilliant author has, in a popular and delightful work of fiction, aimed at a delineation of the Austrian premier, whom he has introduced under the denomination of Becken-



dorf; which character, although most splendidly conceived, is purely ideal,—certainly not a personification of Metternich.

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*Note.*—It may be necessary to vouch for the authenticity of the facts contained in this chapter; and with pleasure I assure the reader, that these circumstances, as detailed, actually occurred to the author. Should any of the exalted personages herein-mentioned ever honour "Harcourt" with their perusal, I feel convinced they cannot have forgotten their visit to Emms.

## CHAPTER II.

Through Manheim Bonn,  
 Which Drackenfels frowns over, like a spectre  
 Of the good feudal times for ever gone,  
 On which I have not time just now to lecture;  
 From thence he was drawn onwards to Cologne,  
 A city which presents to its inspector  
 Eleven thousand maidenheads in bone,  
 The greatest number flesh has ever known.

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

It was at Coblenz that I resumed my solitary peregrinations. There are many volcanic remains in the neighbourhood. It is situated on the confluence of the Moselle and Rhine. The town faces the fortress of Erenbreitchstein, from which it is divided by the river. During the reign of terror, this was a celebrated *point de réunion* for the refugee royalists. Between Coblenz and Bonn stands the Drackenfels and Roland Sec, both illustrated in song, — the one by

Byron, and the other by Mrs. Hemans. With both these spots I was completely disappointed. Perhaps the Rhine has sometimes been over-rated. The humble Meuse, or Maas, which communicates between Leige and Namur always appeared to me redolent with rich views and possessed of greater genuine beauty.

At Cologne I saw the far-famed'sarcophagus of the eastern kings, (Quere, were they the first christians?) and the stupendous commencement of an unfinished cathedral. Cologne may be termed the city of churches. It has been asserted that three hundred sacred buildings adorn this favoured spot; but all those who have read our friend Don Juan, may know that the church of Saint Ursula contains the relics of eleven thousand virgins. Faith ought positively to be represented in a vesture of the fashionable material,—that elastic web called Indian rubber!

As I am not writing a tour, but on the contrary regret being obliged to linger over scenes which have already been so often and so ably described, I shall not enter into an account of Aix-

la-Chappelle, — its gaming establishments, its sulphureous baths, or even the tomb of Charlemagne; but observe that in the different travels I have perused, none have thought fit to notice the wonderful quarries of Maestricht, which are particularly curious and interesting. These stupendous excavations are of unquestionable antiquity: no data or history can be attached to them. The remains of a Roman fortress are still to be seen near the principal entrance. These caverns extend many leagues under ground, and form a subterranean passage to the citadel of Leige. The vaults cross each other in every possible section. It is supposed that the number of avenues amounts to several thousands. A petrified tree in the very heart of the cavern forms an extraordinary object of inquiry. Drops of the most pellucid water distil from its roots, which hang from the roof. Nothing can give the slightest clue with respect to the origin of this wonderful spot. In point of extent and grandeur it far exceeds the famed catacombs of Paris, which owe their celebrity to the singu-

larly vast collection of human bones therein deposited, rather than to any innate interest they excite in themselves. An uncommon spectacle may be observed on emerging from the quarries at Maestricht: the gradual approach towards the surface, exhibits a beautiful appearance of twilight brightening into day; the soft radiance which falls partially on the jutting points of the sharp stone, gives an effect that might furnish an artist with the best possible illustration of the theory of light, shade, and reflection.

I boated down the Meuse to the 'romantic village of Huy, which is protected by a magnificent fortress, that hangs in frowning majesty over the river. A more lovely spot had not yet greeted my attention: it united all the elements of picturesque beauty, rock, wood, water, and architecture combined. From thence I proceeded to the town of Namur, which has sustained more sieges than any other place in Europe. This was the most pleasing if not the most direct road to Brussels. On my way thither I traversed the fields of Quatrebras,

Mont St. Jean, and Waterloo, and saw . . . but this is already the especial province of former tourists, so *I leave them alone in their glory.*

The Netherlands have been fortunate in attracting the notice of many a gifted author.\* The recent political convulsions have raised it from a "flat, stale, and unprofitable" region, to a sort of level with "*La France nouvelle.*" Such is the force of example. The heavy Flemings might have ate, drank, and slept on in peaceful plenty; but a few discontented *avocats sans cause* (*anglicè*, briefless barristers,) who thought that their merits had been overlooked,—the established government having omitted to distinguish their obscurity,—stirred up the people to a sense of wrong, when none had been really inflicted on them. Through the medium of public papers, a horde of demagogues endeavoured to impress the multitude with the opinion that the personal neglect and personal incarceration they had endured, was

\* Especially Messrs. Grattan, and Pryse Lockhart Gordon.

a national grievance ; these needy adventurers had sufficient talent to direct the passions of the mob towards the attainment of their own ambitious purposes. The prohibition of "*La Muette de Portici*," or Massaniello, was the first signal for rebellion. The Bruxellois were clamorous, and would not be deprived of the representation of their favourite opera. It was at length performed to a crowded house. At the fall of the curtain the parterre rose and rushed with one impulse to the house of Libry Bagniano, editor of the ministerial paper. Numbers hurried to the reinforcement ; all were supplied with lighted torches and various missiles. They commenced the attack, shouting with might and main, the celebrated *barcarole*, now familiar to every ear, "*Le roi des mers ne vous échappera pas*," which was probably deemed an excellent allusion to the watery dominions of *Guillaume l'entêté*.

But I have verged on the confines of politics, —a subject I hitherto eschewed. As far as relates to Belgium, the opinions I venture to

acquainted with the real position  
bitants when subjected to the Du  
and what it now is under the pres  
*juste milieu*, got up between the self  
of Louis Philippe and the pow  
nistration of the Big Whigs in  
street.

Sympathy has been warmly excit  
of Greeks, Spaniards, Negroes,  
even Belgians. The name of liber  
invoked. In many instances the  
discontented, have been placed on  
the brave and the patriotic. A noble  
be injured when associated with base  
interests; but the complicated chain  
policy is so linked, that if one bond  
the whole Continent will fall from th



of fellow Britons,—a patient and enduring people, bowed down by poverty, degraded by oppression, assailed with temptation, torn by faction, and devastated by starvation ! Yet that country obtains no redress : its vital interests are thrown over from session to session. We relieve Jews, Turks, and infidels ; we emancipate the negro that was fed and protected in his slavery ; but we forget our white brethren in Ireland.

The kingdom of Belgium, which has lately become a conspicuous feature in the history of Europe, has for the last few years attracted universal attention. The revolutionary changes in the Netherlands may be considered as secondary symptoms of the great constitutional disease which is gnawing the very vitals of the continent. The days of September, already partially described, were the immediate result of the days of July in Paris. The ultimate sum of good, the actual enjoyment of real freedom to be deduced from either, remains yet to be satisfactorily proved ; France being now in the

standing army, and the existing po  
materially affects both trade a  
tures.

The French and Belgians, sinc  
able peace of 1815, have resp  
placed under the yoke of despoti  
former naturally shrank from the  
bigotry and retributive vengean  
out dynasty. The Bourbons w  
odious; their reign was over. .  
French people by the united arm  
Russia, and Prussia, they loathe  
they had been compelled to acce  
of the bayonet. Not so the E  
existed no hereditary disgust, n  
forgiven injuries on either sid  
Nassau formerly Stadtholder of

a versatility scarcely equalled in European history, the Flemings were always in hopes that some benefit would accrue to them, and that an improved condition of their commerce and finances would be the result of every new form of government. With a sentiment of cold-hearted prudence that every magnanimous soul must despise, they abandoned Napoleon at his utmost need. The marshals, generals, and military chieftains he had fostered into greatness, and raised from obscurity, to the very steps of his imperial throne, deserted his fallen fortunes, lest they might be overwhelmed in the mighty ruins. They saw the hero was vulnerable,—“vaulting ambition had o’er-leaped itself;” and as the French ministry sold him to the adverse powers, so the Flemings joined the allied armies, and fought against the Colossus who had so often led them to glory, and whose grandeur they had contemplated so closely, that they ceased to fear its immensity.

Napoleon was crushed—by gold—by numbers — by treachery — no matter how . . . . .

Increased taxation, arbitrary measures, judicial slaughter committed on the brave Labedoyere, Ney, and others less illustrious, but not less lamented, soon rendered the *restauration* deservedly unpopular. Gloom, disaffection, and want of confidence in the new legislature, at length excited the French to a subversion of that government, which, in spite of murmurs, conspiracies, and riots, had contrived to stem the adverse current for fifteen years.

The Parisians struggled in the cause of liberty; they rose simultaneously; it was the *will* of the sovereign people—the people were triumphant.

But the movement which shook the political fabric in one country, created a responsive vibration in the balance of power that regulated the destinies of Belgium. Yet, vast, immeasurable is the moral distance which separates the two nations. Although the latter affect the language, habits, fashions, and sentiments of France, nature has placed her own distinctive

mark on each. The French are great even in their errors. Bold, sanguinary, generous, capricious, energetic, and volatile, with exaggerated enthusiasm, they fly from one extreme to another; carried by the impetus of passing events, by their own wilfulness, more especially by national vanity, which is their leading characteristic, they become either philosophical or warlike, bigoted or *doctrinaire*, as the bias of the day may preponderate.

“The immortal days,” once terrific and sublime, have wonderfully degenerated; (it is doubtful even if Fieschi’s extraordinary affair will resuscitate their faded laurels.) Anniversaries commemorated with a thoughtless prodigality of sentiment produce a bad effect, verging on the ridiculous. Solemn games, funeral orations, *chapelles ardentes*, and the gorgeous pageantry of grief or triumph, though perfectly consistent with that love of display inherent to the French, provoke a feeling of displeasure and contempt towards a spectacle

ment of adolescence, and got a broken on the occasion, is handed posterity as a memorable victim *immortelles journées.*" But the struggle was purely political ; no excesses of rage, or destruction, sullied the new freedom.

In Belgium a different scene unfolded which appears sufficient to illustrate the distinction between the two countries and their respective inhabitants. To return to those who at first had taken the part in the revolution, were perhaps ill-judged of the new legislation : the purest patriots had fallen, while the cunning and ambitious secured, as they thought,

above all, the great, the almost unattainable knowledge of experience ! The theorist or the philanthropist who ponders in his study on some freshly discovered Utopia in political economy, does not foresee the ultimate results of the measures he proposes : he knows not the mighty lever required to raise a constitutional edifice on the crumbling foundation of a sinking dynasty. The innovator may destroy, but experience will reconstruct.

The Belgian revolution, which was commenced in 1830, is not yet concluded. To the lasting disgrace of the cause thus profaned, scenes of brutal outrage and devastating vandalism have marked the respective stages of its destructive progress. Roused to rebellion by incendiary articles that issued from a press which till then had been most injudiciously restricted, the Flemings were devoid of that glowing patriotism, that physical intrepidity and boundless magnanimity, which have characterized the energetic struggles of the Poles and French, in political convulsions of a similar

tendency. Respected and considered by all Europe as an industrious, calculating, and money-making people, anxious to *save* and perhaps still more anxious to *keep*, the Belgians could not be supposed to possess the chivalrous abnegation of self, required to perfect the glorious work of revolution. All rushed forward with sanguine hopes of ameliorating their condition ; and in the adverse hour of anarchy, they recoiled on each other, when the wild anticipations in which they had indulged were no longer likely to be realized.

De Potter, who may be considered as the primary occult cause of the first political struggle, was originally an obscure but highly gifted individual in the town of Bruges. He has lately formed a prominent feature in the senate: from his brilliant talents he first attracted notice, and by their skilful application he obtained popularity amongst the *ultra liberaux*. His principal publication, which acquired considerable celebrity, was the *Life of Scipio di Ricci*, a work, from its licentious tendency, that can



never be admitted into general circulation : its avowed object and design is the desecration of the Church of Rome, and its over-luxurious prelacy ; but however the work in question might flatter the prejudices of those who call themselves *liberal*, it raised a host of the priesthood against him. To conciliate these powerful agents on the minds of a bigoted populace, De Potter affected a conversion, and became . . . apostolical ! and . . . Roman !! He then boldly attacked the Dutch government through the medium of the newspapers. The articles were deemed seditious, and by an act of arbitrary despotism, which was violently reprehended by all parties, the talented De Potter and three of his associates were imprisoned for two years, and ultimately banished from their native soil.

The oppression and ill usage endured by the four exiles was very great, and created much popular excitement. The Batavian yoke was rendered daily more obnoxious ; some real and many alleged grievances were made subservient to the designs of the malcontents.

before either Dutch or Belgians were  
the crisis to which public affairs were  
Confusion reigned throughout the Low  
Fire and pillage were eagerly resorted  
enraged mob, who were stimulated  
and the prospect of plunder. Alarms  
fearful consequences ever attendant on  
the good, the great, the influential persons  
in the commencement had joined the  
of freedom, shrunk back appalled at  
which menaced their property, their homes  
their lives.

De Potter arrived in Brussels, the  
messiah of the epoch. He was received  
universal acclamations. Liberty and  
were expected at his hands, whilst he  
aspired to the glories of a dictator.

For a while he struggled against the factions by which his administration was buffeted and frequently opposed. He endeavoured to conciliate the multitude, by feeble inefficient measures of compromise; but the wild, contending, and discordant elements of insurrection he had once invoked, became too powerful to be restricted within the bounds of prudence and national decorum. He abandoned the helm of state, which he had seized in a critical moment of political panic. The colleagues who had shared in his adversity, and to whom he had entrusted situations of responsibility, did not fulfil his hopes and expectations. Tielmanns, who, it is said, possessed a clear head and superior mind, retired from public life through pique or disgust; whilst Adolphe Barthels, a noisy and vulgar demagogue, aimed at a rude imitation of Robespierre's terrific principles, without possessing either the patriotism or the blood-stained genius that characterized the Nero of the French republic.

For more than twelve months, Belgium was

at the mercy of those who chose to take the reins of government. The personal and praiseworthy exertions of some virtuous and orderly citizens saved the hapless country from utter destruction. The patriarchal Surlet de Chokier accepted the regency, and discharged its arduous duties with the purity of a Cincinnatus, and never abandoned the honourable post he filled with admirable prudence and moderation, until he placed the sovereignty into the hands of the prince of Saxe Cobourg.

Sylvain De van de Weyer, Le Beau, Felix Merode, and the Abbé Dufoere, were the principal instruments of Leopold's elevation to the throne. Men of transcendant talent, they felt that the horrors of a provisional government had lasted long enough to exhaust the energies and finances of an over-taxed and harassed people.

Van de Weyer, now Belgian minister at the British court, is still a very young man, not more than thirty-two years of age, and was formerly Professor of Rhetoric at the University (or Lyceum) of Brussels. Le Beau, who on

some occasions distinguished himself by the most brilliant bursts of eloquence (especially on the election of the king), was a physician in the village of Huy ; and the Abbé Dufoere, who is equally active in his double capacity of parish priest and cabinet minister, possesses all the latent elements of a modern Wolsey. With Christian forbearance, alike creditable to his personal feelings and the sacred character with which he is invested, he declined voting or delivering an opinion on the important question of the expulsion of the house of Nassau from the Belgian throne, in consequence of having received an unjust sentence and prolonged imprisonment under their government, thereby being, as this upright ecclesiastic observed, incompetent to pronounce on those who had injured him.

Generals Neillon and Nypels are of low origin ; the former having been an actor until September 1830, and the latter having exercised the profession of hair-dressing. Of all the characters who appeared on the horizon of public

embraced, and the other is yet prom  
exercise of his senatorial duties.  
talented and patriotic citizens have  
flashed across the political hemisp  
Netherlands; but they were solitary  
for the mass were neither capable of  
freedom by their united exertions,  
ciating its glorious gifts when wi  
grasp. A republican government v  
incompatible with the commercial an  
tural interests of this trafficking nation  
a nominal ruler, was deemed indispe  
its prosperity. I arrived at Brussel  
the ringing of bells and the thunderin  
announced the election of the Duke de  
“*La révolution est finie!*” shouted the  
crowd. “*Au contraire. elle commence*”

discontented Flemings, and secretly encouraging their internal tumults, declined the proffered royalty in the name of his son.

As in every other national convulsion, acts of individual bravery and heroism irradiated the gloomy chaos of the Belgian revolution; the fate of Jenneval, a most accomplished actor, poet, and patriot, was peculiarly touching. Immediately on the expulsion of the Dutch, the Prince of Orange, with his brother, entered Brussels on the faith of a treaty and proclamation.

The former, who is both a prince and a gentleman, possessed a numerous and highly respectable party in Flanders; his conduct had hitherto entitled him to the love and veneration of his subjects. On this occasion, Jenneval wrote the celebrated *Brabançonne*,\* which

\* LA NOUVELLE BRABANÇONNE.

Aux cris de mort et de pillage,  
Des mechans s'etoient rassemblés,  
Mais notre energique courage  
Loin de nous les a refoulés.  
Maintenant purs de cette fange  
Qui flétrissoit notre cité,

proves the general feeling at the time ; but the movements of his Royal Highness Prince of

Amis il faut greffer l'orange  
Sur l'arbre de la liberté.

Oui, fiers enfans de la Belgique,  
Qu'un beau délire a soulevés,  
A notre élan patriotique  
De grands succès sont réservés.  
Restons amis que rien ne change,  
Gardons la même volonté  
Et nous verrons fleurir l'orange  
Sur l'arbre de la liberté.

Oh toi dans qui ton peuple espère !  
Nassau consacre enfin nos droits,  
Des Belges en restant le père  
Tu seras l'exemple des Rois.  
Abjure un ministère étrange,  
Rejette un nom trop detesté,\*  
Et tu verras fleurir l'orange,  
Sur l'arbre de la liberté.

Mais malheur ! si de l'arbitraire  
Protégeant les affreux projets  
Sur nous du canon sanguinaire  
Tu vennois lancer les boulets :—  
Alors tout est fini, tout changé,  
Plus de pacte, plus de traité ;  
Et tu verras tomber l'orange  
De l'arbre de la liberté.

\* Van Maanen, minister at the time the troubles broke out.



Orange were cruelly fettered. The king, although a man of excellent sense, carries his opinions of regal power beyond the present era of liberal reform : arbitrary measures were adopted by the Dutch, and enforced with vigour by the younger Prince Frederick, which gave at once a death-blow to the hopes and adherents of the house of Nassau.

Jenneval was killed on the re-commencement of hostilities ; the battle of Brussels delivered the Belgians from their allegiances to the princes, and plunged them deeply into anarchy and bloodshed.

Coveted by France, yet struggling in the fangs of England, torn by hungry demagogues, and shrinking from the retributive vengeance of the Dutch, the States of revolutionized Flanders acknowledged Leopold as their sovereign king. Just before the ultimate decision which placed his royal highness of Saxe-Cobourg on the throne, the following distich was found attached to the tree of liberty that flourished in the Grand Place of Brussels :

The election of Leopold was  
 pleasure by all parties; it gave l  
 manent peace, national tranquil  
 public and private security. For t  
 of these hopes we must look to  
 which are in daily progress. Fac  
 themselves. There were many rede  
 in the history of the last few year  
 virtue, talent, magnanimity, have  
 themselves occasionally in the trar  
 the cabinet, and in the fearful hour  
 human nature displayed itself in c  
 pects under the effects of opposit  
 The vile or the noble passions w  
 onish mankind

a member of the Belgian deputation to Rotterdam. On landing there, the Dutch populace assembled on the quay were outrageous in their vociferations.

“Down with Stassart! Where is Stassart?” cried they, eager for destruction and revenge. “Make no mistake, for I am he!” exclaimed the baron, calmly: he proceeded unmolested. Thus intrepidity has the noble privilege of disarming the unjust and ill-directed fury of the mob. How long the Netherlands will remain the theatre of disaffection and revolutionary tumult, is a conjecture not easily solved. The present condition of Europe resembles a moving panorama: some additional, but not unexpected intelligence is constantly brought before us; great, contending, and discordant are the elements of national independence dispersed through the kingdom, and which are with difficulty kept within bounds by that most powerful of all political unions,—the Holy Alliance.

It is not for us to speculate on the stu-

pendous changes of events, and extraordinary results yet to be apprehended from the general impetus which has more or less affected every established form of government. Belgium is indeed but a small feature in the face of Europe, and in the preceding pages I have only adhered to a few prominent facts of unquestionable veracity, which came under my own knowledge, leaving to the biographer and intelligent observer, a wide and fertile source for more ample investigation.

Illustrated as the rich plains of Brabant have been by the exertion of so many able and elegant pens, it would be presumption in me to add another section to what may appear already too diffuse.

The scenery of the Low Countries possesses but little beauty, and it would require no small power of graphic description to impart interest to the land (not of frogs) but of "*canaux, canards, canaille,*" which I quitted with little regret, and threw myself most unpoetically into a clumsy Paris diligence.

## CHAPTER III.

Perière mores, jus, decus, pietas, fides,  
Et qui redire nescit, cum perit pudor.

SENECA.

'Tis gold  
Which makes the true man killed, and saves the thief,  
Nay, sometimes hangs both thief and true man : what  
Can it not do, and undo ?

SHAKSPEARE, *Cymbeline*.

Give me a bowl of wine :  
I have not that alacrity of spirit,  
Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.

SHAKSPEARE, *Richard III*.

My journey to the French capital was probably the least interesting of any yet undertaken by me. The countries through which I had hitherto travelled boasted some charm and diversity of landscape : of such advantages Picardy and the northern departments are perfectly devoid ; for of all high roads a French high road is decidedly the most tiresome ;

nevertheless I found myself more capable of enjoying the every-day gratification of a clear sky and dusty plain. I was recovering my spirits, and entered Paris with the determination of amusing myself to the best of my ability. Every one has been in Paris, or at all events, if they have not actually corporeally been there, imagination has transported them thither at least a thousand times. Fancy has done much towards familiarizing us with its peculiarities, and every creature who can read, has already run riot amongst its palaces, theatres, gardens, its wretchedness, and its filth. Every body may picture to themselves the strange *mélange* of luxury and misery,—of refinement and dirt,—of elegance and comfortlessness. These contradictions, singular as they may appear, are far more conspicuous in Paris than in any other city in the world. In London, gradations are to be traced through every rank of life, from St. James's to the hovel. An Englishman's home, whatever his station or income may be, is his castle ; it is the tabernacle of his family.

Every advantage his means, however limited, can command, is obtained for the purpose of improving and adorning the temple of his penates, — the domestic sanctuary.

Not so the Parisian : his fireside is the last consideration. The great moral difference between England and the Continent is more felt in Paris than at Constantinople ; for Paris may be considered the type of every thing in Europe ; the habits and customs of every country may be viewed collectively in the course of a short sojourn in the French metropolis ; whereas London represents England alone. Every body has either been individually at Paris, or thinks with some truth, that they know a vast deal about its localities. The narrow, insignificant river, with its stately *quais* and graceful bridges ; the Tuilleries, with straight alleys of formal horse-chesnut trees, (luxuriant even in their rectangular stiffness ; ) the numerous marble basins surrounded by matchless groups of statuary ; the gorgeous arcades of the Palais Royal, redolent with diversified temptation, — its variegated

shops, its hundred coffee houses, its thousand columns, and its myriad of visitors ; with the topographical position of every public building in the universal city, are familiar as household words with the majority of readers.

Lady Morgan is the first person who wrote on France, or rather Paris ; for the capital is in itself the nation, and the nation is concentrated in the capital. Before the present era, travels were published ; but no one ever thought of writing the moral and metaphysical history of a people. Chronological facts, and geographical descriptions, were both frequent and accurate ; yet, although countries and governments were objects of curiosity and research, it remained for the literati of the nineteenth century, to portray the varied peculiarities of feature in national character, and write a detailed account of men, manners and society.

As to the excellence of these productions, and their influence on the taste and feelings of the multitude, there is not much to be said, except that in point of piquancy and anecdote, they



cannot fail to supersede the ponderous yet meritorious tomes of our ancestry, and make up in amusement what they want in style and erudition.

Lady Morgan may be considered as the parent of modern tourists; and without praising her work, which, though sparkling, clever, and decidedly entertaining, is pre-eminently flippant, and frequently erroneous; yet we still owe her gratitude, as having introduced a pleasant variety in the dull monotony of perambulating journals.

Henry Lytton Bulwer has exerted a more masculine pen, in a style somewhat similar, but far superior. With a firm hand, he has dispelled the heavy mists of prejudice and opinion, which hung for years like a cloud between the rival nations. Thus we all know Paris theoretically—almost too well; for there is a nakedness, a harshness of outline, a moral dissection of the human heart, in Bulwer's extraordinary work, that almost makes us regret the truth of the picture which he induces us to contemplate. He speaks

of that which he has seen and known, not merely with reference to its existence, but renders the reader a sort of party—an eye-witness to the matter on record; and, at last, one almost fancies having participated individually in the scenes so graphically depicted.

In addition to these, the shelves of every library in the three kingdoms are teeming with a host of tours, travels, rambles, journals, diaries, and sketches, of days, weeks, months, and years, spent by *ennuyées*, invalids, ladies, gentlemen, noblemen, and pedestrian authors on the Continent.

This being the case, I almost fear the imputation of a twice-told tale; and, however reluctantly, find it advisable to hasten over the recital of those occurrences which took place during my residence in Paris, with as much brevity as I can command, lest I become tedious and forfeit the goodwill of my readers, for the sake of having my story out.

Nevertheless, Paris is an extraordinary city—a wonderful amalgamation of things and peo-

ple — a sort of general emporium of human beings and their works. No other place in the universe presents so much variety, or so much amusement. Yet with all its advantages, all its excellences, Paris is not the home I should select, or the spot where I would educate my children, or introduce my wife, if prevailed upon in a moment of weakness, to perpetrate the latter offence. I would just let her view it like a panorama — a tree of knowledge to be seen, to be admired, but not to be partaken of. Yet hordes, nay, swarms of English, infest the hotels and lodging-houses of the French metropolis, fill the theatres, people the Palais Royal, support the restaurateurs, and expose their country and themselves to ridicule and imposition. If the expenditure of these visitors was withdrawn during six months, half the buildings would be untenanted, half the shops shut, half the innkeepers, limonadiers, and *marchands* of every description, be reduced to a state little short of bankruptcy. It may be said, with considerable truth, that England maintains a

large portion of the French population. A similar outlay of income would go far towards supporting her own.

I had many reasons of a strictly personal nature, which induced me to avoid the shoals of compatriots congregated in Paris. Many of these persons were recklessly indulging in every dissipated excess their means and inclinations could procure ; and, favoured with the facilities afforded by foreign manners, mixed in a society which could not for a moment be tolerated at home. Thus, when people ought to be most scrupulous in their conduct, and endeavour to uphold the national character in the estimation of a rival kingdom, they prefer seeking and enjoying those licentious pleasures, which a purer system of legislation condemns, and consider that "being on the Continent" forms a fair and ever ready excuse for "out-Heroding Herod." Amongst the most conspicuous of these was... Lord St. Elme!

I met him accidentally : we spoke, or rather he accosted me, in a tone of friendship, which

I scarcely had a right to expect. He was greatly changed, and looked thin, as if his constitution was beginning to give way under the constant excitement of gambling. On inquiry, I found he was indeed a lost man: he had plunged deeply into every species of vice;—to cards, hazard, the turf, low company, and women, the unfortunate viscount added inebriety. He had commenced the use of stimulants, by way of dispelling care, and in order to acquire that jovial and convivial tone which the practised profligate so eagerly assumes, by way of a mask to conceal the hideous deformity of the real character. From occasional indulgence, the habits of intoxication increased gradually until it became a formidable and rooted evil; but it might be plainly perceived in his haggard countenance, that the flush of pleasure and of wine gleamed like the lightning of the storm, being the phrenzy of the hour, which partially relieved the horrors of consciousness with the maddening delusions of oblivion.

ing, moments of sorrowful  
were immediately swept away in  
turmoil of dissipation.

On meeting me, his dormant  
peared to awaken; a sense of sh  
his manner painfully confused, a  
to find that sensibility was not  
guished. In the latent hope o  
from utter ruin, I gladly caught at  
opportunity of frequenting his so  
joining in his pursuits, and trusted  
be rescued from the gulf before hi

I called at his hotel, and was a  
splendid apartments furnished with  
and elegance which wealth could co  
knowing the wretched state of

me with genuine cordiality, and a remnant of gentlemanly ease, which adheres like hope to the very bottom of Pandora's box of human miseries. A man may lose his fortune, his friends, his character, and break through the last ties of virtuous resolution ; yet he seldom forgets the outward forms of that good breeding which is habitual to the class of society in which he was reared.

We conversed for some time on general topics, and discussed the anecdotes of the day, the merits of the new dancers, the music of the last opera, the face of the prima donna, and the horses which were to run at Doncaster, Epsom, and the Bois de Boulogne during the next season : at last I gradually diverted his attention from the present and the future, to that most unsatisfactory of all epochs, the past. We spoke of . . . Anastasia.

• With more emotion than I could possibly have given him credit for, he bewailed her fall with a mixture of returning tenderness and self-accusation.

“Harcourt,” said he, “I was once a happy man; I married the woman of my heart, before I knew the value of domestic peace, and I lost it ere I understood its existence. When first you visited us in B—— Square, I was lingering on the last boundaries of felicity; the cup was not dashed from my lips, but I heedlessly exhausted its contents. I did not precisely throw aside the blessings showered upon me; but I knew not how to enjoy them. Moderation was an exertion of self-denial which I could neither comprehend nor practise. I imagined that the feverish pleasures of the fashionable world, were compatible with the fire-side comfort of conjugal affection . . . I panted for pleasure . . . and with gratification the appetite increased . . . I followed the *ignis fatuus* of pleasure . . . pleasure! the very antidote to happiness, the ministering hand-maiden of regret . . . I was deluded from the pursuit of every thing, either great, good, or salutary.”

“True, my lord,” cried I, warmed with a faint prospect of directing this freshly awakened



sensibility to a more serious train of reflection. "But when regret is once endured, its sting may be extracted. The disease is no longer incurable, when the consequences are felt. — Tired and disappointed in the career of pleasure, other resources are open. . . ."

"Well, well," interrupted he with impatience, "but it is too late to alter now: my habits are fixed . . . it is no use to lecture or think about it now . . . only I do not wish . . . I do not mean . . . I should be sorry that you should believe me quite callous to the wreck of former happiness."

"Indeed, my lord, I am convinced of the truth of your assertions, although I tremble at the instability of your impressions. You feel deeply at the present moment, but . . ."

"I do *feel*, Harcourt! Oh God! there are times when the bitterness of my position overwhelms my fortitude. I weep over the past, and shudder at the future . . . all is unavailing now . . . Anastasia is lost to me for ever . . . no effort of mine can restore her honour or her

peace of mind . . . and when I think what she once was,—innocent, artless, affectionate, and pure . . . that she once loved me with the confiding tenderness of a wife . . . and I cast her from me . . . I neglected her . . . for what? for . . . pleasure! . . . I knew not how to cherish the sweet rose blooming freshness in my path . . . she might perhaps have been saved . . . but it was I,—her husband, that destroyed her . . . Oh that arch-fiend, Glenmore! . . . how he lured me from dissipation to dissipation . . . how he threw his toils around me! I had not strength to break through them . . . I might have struggled longer . . . but my fate was . . . inevitable!”

The unhappy man struck his clenched fist against his forehead, and walked about the room with considerable agitation. I approached him with extended hand. He gazed at me fixedly, — the fierce, yet agonized expression of his countenance is not to be depicted.

“It is too late,” murmured he between his teeth: “I am desperately involved . . . I am . . . dishonoured.”

And he turned sharply from me, and swallowed a copious draught of some favourite beverage that was contained in a *caraffe* standing on the table. His thoughts turned mechanically to the night's orgie for which he was preparing; the conflict of feeling and memory was over; the ruling passion re-asserted its formidable dominion over a mind which was gradually becoming weaker from exhaustion.

“ You dine with me, Harcourt,” continued he, after a short pause; “ just a party of twelve, at six o'clock punctually, not to lose the evening. The cook of this hotel is a finished *artiste*, and you know I am a judge. As for wine, there can be no excuse if it is not the finest growth France ever produced, for my orders were unlimited.”

“ Forgive me,” exclaimed I, “ but surely you do not give entertainments! Being *en garçon*, is sufficient to emancipate your lordship from the inconvenience of hospitality.”

“ I had a run of luck this week: the dinner was a bet which I lost; so your diges-

tion need not be impeded by scruples," cried he carelessly. "Let us live while we can; for we know not what to-morrow may bring: — now, Charles, do not be a fool, but come and dine with me like a man. We will talk over serious matters afterwards; and I promise my best attention; but do not refuse to meet a choice set of the merriest fellows in Paris. Besides whom, we shall have the pretty Mrs. —, and Mademoiselle Eulalie, the dancer, to say nothing of little Madame —. Depend on it, we shall make it pleasant and drive dull care away."

I pleaded a prior engagement, and only yielded a reluctant ear to St. Elme's hurried enumeration of actress's, *Greeks*, and courtezans, whose wit, beauty and refinement he eulogized with peculiar emphasis; but I could not persuade myself to witness the debauchery of my sister's husband: if I could not succeed in snatching him from perdition, I did not think fit to participate in his excesses.

I made a few careful inquiries respecting the situation of the viscount, and the possibility of

bringing his pecuniary affairs into training. In the course of conversation I elicited from himself a sad confirmation of the reports circulated in England, and discovered that the extent of his embarrassments even exceeded my fears. Every one coincided in the opinion, that Lord St. Elme never could again appear on British ground, and that even a tardy but vigorous retrenchment would not save him from the terrors of imprisonment or the brand of disgrace.

As my visits were, to say the least, superfluous, I remained rather distant for some weeks. Unable to be of the slightest service, I shrank from the wretched contemplation of his weakness and profligacy ; yet I could not divest myself of a certain interest in his behalf, and after hesitating some time on the line of conduct to be pursued, I resolved at the expiration of some days to call on him in the course of the ensuing evening.

I had dined early, and thinking it too soon for fashionable visiting, as I knew Lord St. Elme was fond of prolonging the joys of dinner

beyond the usual French termination of coffee and mareschino, I lounged into the Palais Royal by way of passing off another half-hour, ere I could with propriety presume to intrude on his festive repast.

The arcades of the famed emporium of folly (not to say crime) were highly illuminated ; the shops exhibited a spectacle of unrivalled brilliancy ; the multifarious productions of two worlds were displayed in every possible variety, and with most tasteful arrangement. Crowds of idlers were hurrying to and fro in every direction, in the eager search after some additional gratification or amusement, in accordance with their characteristic passions, habits, and inclinations. It was a wide field for philosophical speculation. The busy scene was replete with interest ; it was a sort of fairy land, such as we read of, such as we see on the stage ; but unlike either the creations of fiction or of art, the sparkling lights may be quenched, the giddy throng will disperse, the excitement must subside ; but the dreadful realities of vice and dissi-

pation will continue to exert their fatal influence equally through the hours of darkness, and the glare of day.

I was moralizing as I walked along; the sounds of revelry that ever and anon burst upon the ear, were fearfully discordant; silence would have been less awful; the merriment of the vicious is not gay, it is the expiring effort of self-delusion, and merely drowns the last feeble cries of smothered resistance. I had not proceeded far, when a man rushed past, and jostled against me. I remonstrated; he turned round to face me—it was Lord St. Elme.

“What! is that you, Harcourt?” exclaimed he, laughing: “such a saint as you are in the Palais Royal! Well, there are hopes of you, my boy;”—his lordship reeled, and hiccupped as he spoke.

“I was positively on my way to call on you, my lord,” replied I, offering the support of my arm to my staggering companion.

“What a pleasant place Paris is,” said he:

“always something going on at all times of the day—and night too, he! he! he! So you have found out that it is better to amuse oneself than to be thinking of misfortunes. What a discovery!!!”

“I do not know if I can exactly agree with the latter part of your observations,” cried I; “but certainly there is no other place in the world equal to Paris in point of . . . *pleasure.*”

“How you harp on that last word, as if you were of a different opinion. I say Paris is a delightful place; and you cannot contradict me,” answered the viscount, pettishly. “I know every nook and corner, and can find something to amuse me every where. This gaiety keeps up my spirits, Harcourt; I could not get on without it.”

“You might perhaps be better without it,” I observed seriously.

“As you were coming to pass the evening with me,” interrupted St. Elme, “at least we will spend it together, no matter where. Let



me be your *ciceroni* — or your *chaperone*, I should say," added he, charmed with his own bright idea.

"Very well, my lord ; but do not deceive me : let me be aware of the nature of the establishment in which you mean to introduce me as a neophyte, that I may be prepared," returned I, buttoning my coat with more energy than common to me.

"That's a good fellow ; come with me to No. —, here we are at the door. We can get off for silver ; that is perhaps agreeable news," cried he, jocosely : "I know it is most welcome to me just now."

We were indeed on the threshold of a gambling-house, and, curious to witness the occult proceedings of a Parisian Pandemonium, I accompanied, or rather conducted the intoxicated viscount into the temple of fortune, determined not to quit him unless compelled to do so by insurmountable disgust.

It appeared that he had hitherto only frequented the more aristocratic order of establish-

ments, generally classified under the appropriate appellation of Hells ; and I was inclined to think, from present circumstances, that he could no longer afford the high stakes required elsewhere, and was induced, through poverty, to have recourse to the common nuisances which infest the dwelling of the Citizen King.

Grouped round a large table, covered with green baize, and lighted with suspended lamps, was an assemblage that seemed to belong to numerous classes of society. The picture was worthy of an artist. The strong glare concentrated, and thrown on the marked figures which hung in the tortures of expectancy over the mysterious board, gave force to the outline, and a depth of shadow producing considerable effect. The fatal roulette graced the centre, whilst the more equitable *rouge et noir* was played with cards by the impassable croupiers, who at intervals murmured the monotonous monosyllables which conveyed hope or desperation to the collected crowd.

“*Rouge gagne, — noir perd,*” uttered the oracle of chance. Many and eager were the hands put forth to receive the winnings; but except those who have seen a gaming-table and its frequenters, none can imagine the horrible disappointment which distorts the features of those who are losers. It is not possible to conceive the low cunning, the agonized suspense, the vulgar triumph, the diabolical rage, and the hopeless despondency which is alternately depicted in the wretched countenances of those who hover like demons around, watching the cast of a die, which is perhaps to consign them and their family to endless misery.

St. Elme drew near, and instead of patiently observing the chances, and calculating the odds, threw down a few pieces of silver, which at once convinced me of the fact that he could not produce gold. He won,—contrary indeed to my expectation. Delight, ecstasy, beamed in his face, and irradiated his care-worn physiognomy.

“Come, Harcourt,” cried he, with animation, “now you *are* here, try your luck ; first stake a few francs to begin with, and put you in temper.”

“No, I thank you,” answered I: “I never play,—no matter on what terms;—your lordship is in the vein, I perceive.”

“High time too,” cried my companion. “What with the lottery,—the salon,—and a certain fair friend of mine, I am drained as dry as dust . . . My finances require a little replenishing, and I came here for the purpose. I always have a favourable run when playing silver.”

The viscount continued doubling and tripling his bets ; again and again he won. The pile of dollars was transformed into a pile of Napoleons ; which again were exchanged for heavy rouleaux.

“*Rouge gagne — noir perd,*” muttered the croupier. St. Elme nodded, and was again a winner. Again he urged me to join the sport, saying, that he did not intend remaining much

longer, having friends to sup with him after the opera, and a game of *ecarté*, in perspective.

I strenuously declined both his temptation and his supper. To say the truth, my attention was greatly attracted by an individual, who for some time had formed a most conspicuous feature in the picturesque group. He was a tall, dark man, with a military air; a coat braided and frogged was buttoned close up to his throat; the texture of his dress appeared greatly worn. He was no longer young, yet could not precisely be considered old. His hair was long, shaggy, and neglected; a black stock, shining with constant use, was put on in the best style; neither waistcoat nor linen was visible; trowsers which had evidently once been regimental finished the *ensemble* of a costume, which, however it might want for newness and fashion, was not deficient in dignity. His face it would be difficult to convey through the medium of language. It had been handsome, and was still characteristic: he was pale to

sallowiness, hollow-eyed, and furrowed with care or passion: the forehead was capacious enough to admit of intellect, had it not been contracted with habitual anxiety; and the flash of his glance might have belonged either to genius or desperation.

I observed him lose for a considerable time, with an equanimity that surprised me: his lip compressed and bloodless, was the only indication of his inward anguish. At length I caught his fixed gaze; not that he saw *me* in particular, for I verily believe his sight was absorbed in visions of the future, but the gleam of his eye was absolutely frightful, and it seemed gradually to kindle into a flame, as he threw down another stake . . . I heard him breathe as if with an effort. He lost . . . and gave a ghastly look at that board from whence his solitary five-franc piece was swept by the banker's insatiable grasp . . . he thrust his hand once more into his bosom . . . he withdrew it, and his nails seemed tinged with blood.

“ *Faites le jeu, Messieurs!* ” ejaculated the

dealer. Again the stranger plunged his hand into his pocket : his clenched teeth and glaring eye-balls gave him the expression of a maniac. — He flung another dollar . . . it was the last . . .

“ *Noir gagne, et rouge perd,*” proclaimed the croupier, with the apathy of routine.

Fortune had changed sides ; and the sudden report of a pistol followed the conclusion of the sentence . . . the stranger fell a mangled corpse into the arms of a waiter.

For a moment all was still—not a word, not a sound escaped the assembly. Horror,—breathless, speechless horror, was painted on every face. A large pier-glass was sprinkled with the blood and brains of the reeking victim, and the polished surface of the inlaid *parquet* was streaming with gore . . . The wretched suicide was rolled in a carpet, and hurried from the spot . . . the mirror was wiped . . . the floor was sanded . . . and a deep-drawn aspiration seemed to relieve the oppressed bosoms of the silent crowd.

I looked towards St. Elme. He was deadly pale ; every limb seemed to palpitate ; his eyes wandered in vacancy . . . the hideous sight just witnessed had sobered him . . .

“ *Messieurs, faites le jeu,*” croaked the croupier. The sound which thus broke in upon the natural course of human feeling, was beyond every thing appalling. The fiend re-asserted his prerogative . . . My brother-in-law stepped forward . . . and risked another *rouleau !*” \*

On retiring from the scene of guilt, I passed a night of shocking wakefulness. The terrific spectacle was constantly before me, and haunted my fancy in every possible variety of form. The bleeding, lacerated figure of the self-murderer assumed sometimes the features of St. Elme, sometimes those of Augustus Percival ; but I could not by any effort of reason dispel the horrible image which darkness did not con-

\* This extraordinary occurrence actually took place at a gambling-house in the Palais Royal some years ago. The author has detailed the event most circumstantially.



ceal from me. Fevered, restless, tired, but still sleepless, I watched the slow approach of day, as a stream of mellowed light began to peer through the interstices of my closet-shutters. A perturbed drowsiness was stealing upon me, and I was just sinking under the combined influence of fatigue and slumber, when a knock at the door roused me from my tardy repose.

“ *Entrèz,*” cried I, thinking my valet de place had been rather more alert than usual; but to my utter astonishment Lord St. Elme stood by my bed-side. He had not changed his dress since the preceding night; his eyes were bleared, almost inflamed; his hair in disorder, and his whole exterior denoted a mixture of care and debauchery.

“ You are an early visitor,” my lord, said I, gravely; “ this is not an hour . . . ”

“ My dear fellow,” replied he, “ I have been waiting these twenty minutes. The stupid hotel people did not like to disturb you; it was only by dint of bothering that I got up stairs at all.”

“They were quite right,” answered I; “not having rested during the night, I felt now inclined to sleep. Pray to what motive am I to attribute this unseasonable call?”

“To tell you the plain truth, Harcourt,” returned St. Elme, attempting to appear unconcerned, “I am devilish hard up for cash. The most confounded run of ill luck pursued me after we parted.”

“Indeed,” observed I; “it seemed otherwise at the commencement of the evening.”

“True, but the accident upset me altogether; I could not count two and two,—never won a point afterwards; besides which, I was completely plucked at *écarté* after supper. I believe there was too much champagne . . . . Harcourt, I have not a rapp left . . . .”

“You surprise me, Lord St. Elme,” said I, coldly; “for a ruined man you appear to take matters easily enough.”

“What is the use of fretting?” exclaimed he; “candour is preferable to cant,—to cut the story short, I want you to accommodate me with a few pounds until next week.”

“A strange request you must acknowledge,” observed I; “and one for which I happen to be totally unprepared.”

“I will pay you again punctually,” continued the viscount; “but I positively must have the money, at least before noon this day, for my time is up, and bills are come due. If you do not assist me, I shall get lodgings rent free.”

Shocked at this strange appeal, I replied, “The money shall be yours, my dear lord, if it is of service. I am only too happy to make the sacrifice. I have a small sum at La Fitte’s, which I will bring myself to your hotel. Yet, in the name of God, how could you persevere in play last night, with that dreadful catastrophe before your face?”

“Do not say another word,” cried my brother-in-law, putting his hands before his eyes, as if to exclude a disagreeable object.

“It was a dreadful calamity,” interrupted I.

“A truce, with your sermons;—spare me the infliction,” exclaimed he, impatient of reproof even in its mildest form. “Bring me the

money in time, and I shall be eternally obliged to you."

"Certainly, I promise faithfully to do so. I only wish I could as easily obtain your lordship's attention as your gratitude. If you could be induced to listen, some advantage might be derived from what I have to communicate. You ought not to deem me impertinent, in thus offering my advice and admonition, if you knew but all . . ."

"I do, I do know all;" stammered my companion with kindly feeling. "Poor Anastasia was your half-sister; you see I am apprised of it all: it was that villain, Glenmore, who told me the whole story. Let us shake hands like brothers,—now, do not look so serious; it cannot be helped; 'pon my word, I always felt as if you were something to me."

"Then my dear St. Elme, try and bear with my preaching. These direful pursuits that can only lead to perdition . . ."

"There you are boring again, Harcourt," cried he, with undisguised displeasure. "I can't

stand moralizing,—never could in my life,—too old to alter now . . . I shall expect you at twelve, without fail . . . good bye . . . and his lordship hurried down stairs, humming as he went—

“ *Esperance—confiance.* ”

The fumes of the intoxication of the previous night were not dispersed. Lord St. Elme was still drunk.

Faithful to my appointment, at half-past eleven, I rang the bell of the viscount's antechamber; the door was open, and the *debris* of a supper were scattered on a table in the middle of the room; the *salle a manger*, as it was termed, was encumbered with heterogeneous articles. Flasks, which had once contained champagne, were piled in one corner; glasses of various colours and dimensions, broken and unbroken, sweetmeats, oyster-shells, plates, corks, dishes, knives, forks, chairs, flowers and a bowl which still retained a small portion of *punche a la romaine*, proclaimed, but too evidently, that a saturnalia had taken place a few hours previous to my arrival.

I penetrated without obstacle to the salon, which presented an amalgamation of cards of different sorts and hues, strewed in every possible direction ; candlesticks, dice, argand lamps, counters, and tables ; scraps of paper covered with calculations of chance, I O U's and torn acknowledgments were scattered over the floor. An elegant cashmere shawl was thrown across a Grecian sofa, announcing, as it were, that the apartment was frequented, if not inhabited, by a female. Here I waited until St. Elme appeared. He was accompanied by a woman, whose flushed cheek rendered the *rouge* she wore at least superfluous ; and in the bold glance that challenged mine, I discovered the once downcast eye of . . . . Mary Smith.

“ Allow me to introduce you, Mr. Harcourt, to a very particular friend of mine.—Mary, my dear, you have heard me speak of Harcourt,” exclaimed his lordship, with a *nonchalance* I could scarcely comprehend.

I bowed in silence, and opened my *portfeuille*.

“If you had not started off like a Puritan, at such a Gothic hour, I should have taken you with me to the opera, where we keep a box *à l’année*—and have introduced some pleasant people, who were so kind as to return with us to supper. We had such a nice convivial party . . . had’nt we, Mary love?” added his lordship, with a hiccup that proved the bottle was resorted to in the morning.

I was disgusted beyond measure, and scarcely could contain the expression of repugnance with which this degraded pair inspired me.

Mary, whose identity was incontrovertible, attracted my principal attention. I could not conceive if really the glaring, vulgar, vicious courtesan of Paris, could possibly retain the slightest vestige of the innocence and purity of the country maiden. She had advanced by rapid strides,—the goal of corruption was fully attained. . . . . I gave the desired sum to the viscount, and pleading an indispensable engagement, hastened from their presence.

## CHAPTER IV.

Man to man so oft unjust,  
Is always so to woman : one sole bond  
Awaits them ; treachery is all their trust.

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

I HAD seen nearly every thing in Paris, and formed a few pleasing acquaintance amongst the Parisians, who are ever anxious to do the honours of their city to intelligent strangers. I visited every place of note, from the Invalides to the Salon des Marechaux,—from David's pictures to the Gobelins tapestry,—from the Louvre to the Bicesstre,—from Le Père la Chaise to Les Enfants Trouvés,—from the Opera to the Catacombs,—in short, from the Barriere de Le Etoile to the Barriere du Trone.

There is no place in the world where national vanity is so conspicuous as in Paris. Had



Napoleon lived, he would have realized his plan of making Paris the centre of the European circle. The French love show ; above all, they love their monuments with a sort of idolatrous predilection : they have joined hand and heart in forming and preserving the various *musées bibliotèques*, picture galleries, &c. &c. During the popular fury in 1793, the marble statues and vases in the Tuilleries were respected by the mob, and a Switz preserved his life by clinging to one of the celebrated groups from the antique; he was left unhurt, as the Parisians were fearful of injuring the work of art which embellished their favourite promenade.

One evening, before I quitted the French metropolis, I sallied forth to enjoy an ice on the Boulevard des Italiens; but instead of proceeding straight to the rendezvous of dandyism, (for I never could bring myself to consider the dusty vicinity of Tortoni's crowded with shop-boys and grissettes,—not to say worse,—as the resort of fashion,) I lounged towards Les Variétés : it was too early to enter ; but an assem-

blage of *bons bourgeois* were sipping coffee, *orgeat*, and *sirop* most quietly at the adjoining *limonadiers*, waiting patiently until the opening doors would admit them to the laugh-provoking delights of Perlet's inimitable *Comedien d'Etampes*, or the more refined *gentillesse* of Jenny Vertpré's *Reine de Seize Ans*.

The *affiche* which displayed its blue and yellow glories on either side the entrance of this diminutive temple of Thespis was rather of an inviting description ; and on deliberation, I deemed it wiser to be stewed in the parterre of the theatre and laugh myself hoarse, than be choked, jostled, and probably run over by some awkward cab-driver at Tortoni's.

I took a chair and a newspaper from the humble café attached to the play-house, and, seated on the Boulevard, commenced that most amusing species of observation, of watching the passers-by, and conjecturing from their external appearance, the trade, profession, and specific class to which they belong ; the newspaper serving as a *contenance*, as ladies hold a fan.

My speculations were interrupted by the sharp note of interrogation which issued from the sweet *comptoir* of a *bouquetière*. I must confess that this same *bouquetière* was a sort of acquaintance; she happened to be a pretty brunette, with a neatly turned foot and ankle, which were sufficiently displayed under the short full plaits of a scarlet petticoat. Our acquaintance, nevertheless, was strictly platonic, as yet, nor indeed had I any serious intention of infringing on the good will of the vivacious vender of Neapolitan violets, moss-roses, lilies of the valley, or the large, solitary red carnation so eagerly sought by those who have not yet attained the cordon of the legion of honour; but if things continue as they have done, I fear the demand for *des œillets rouges* will be on the decline.

I selected some flowers, and desired my mirthful *bouquetière*, to form the nosegay with her usual taste and discernment. She was busily employed assorting shades, sizes, and scents, when my attention was attracted by the

tones of a hand-organ: it was playing a favourite French romance, one that had been encored *au Feydeau*, and melted the hearts of the most obdurate critics; a voice of captivating sweetness accompanied the instrument. I looked at the singer, who was still young, but care had already stamped her features; there was a touching simplicity in her air; her black eyes were cast upon the ground; a stray love-lock escaped from under a red Madras kerchief that was pinned on with some taste.

She held a little child by the hand, who extended a small tamburine for voluntary contributions. At first the singing was extremely soft, but gradually, timidity gave way to a pleasing confidence. She certainly combined taste with great feeling. I liked her style more particularly, as her manner contrasted with the bold effrontery of others in a similar situation. I felt interested, and observed that she evidently selected the most pathetic airs, some of which I have heard from professional celebrities; but never, no never, did I listen

with more pleasure, than to the soul-subduing notes of the *pauvre chanteuse des Boulevards*.

I was indulging a sort of melancholy gratification, when I was interrupted by the *bouquetière*, whose lively face beamed with more than usual intelligence :

“ Monsieur is apparently pleased with Rose’s songs,” said she, in a voice of inquiry, to which I replied in the affirmative.

“ Poor Rose is a neighbour of mine : her story is quite affecting,” returned my self-constituted companion, with a communicative look.

“ I suppose you know all about her,” said I.

“ Perhaps the recital may detain monsieur too long,” observed the *bouquetière*, with hesitation.

“ No, no,” replied I, laughing ; “ you are more anxious to tell it than you choose to acknowledge. I would not disappoint you, mademoiselle.”

“ Monsieur is so agreeable,” retorted my friend, smiling, so as to display a complete set

of polished ivory, with which she appeared tolerably satisfied.—“ *Eh bien !*” continued she, busily arranging her blooming merchandize, in the most advantageous point of view. “ Rose was an inhabitant of the south. She was poor, but every one in the village loved and respected her. She was an orphan, and gained a decent livelihood by her industry. She had constant employment about the chateau, where she was always kindly welcomed by the lady : her visits were hailed with delight by all its inhabitants. Rose worked well, and assiduously, and had become a favourite with the family with whom she was nearly resident, when madame’s nephew, the Count de St. Aubin came down from Paris. He fell in love with her, and you may suppose that the attentions of a handsome young cavalier were not displeasing to Rose. This continued for a considerable time : she was foolish enough to believe all the fine things he said : the count promised marriage as soon as his father’s consent could be obtained. He said he would

come to Paris in order to plead his cause more effectually. He came . . . but not until he had robbed the credulous Rose of her innocence. She relied on his honour, judging his affection by her own.

“Months elapsed. No news of the count. Rose was pregnant. You may suppose what she felt at this; her shame was public; she was shunned by those who formerly caressed her; many less virtuous than herself pretended to despise her; she did not dare show herself even at mass; she only ventured to visit the grave of her parents,—there alone she was secure from the taunts and opprobrium of the world. Still no tidings of St. Aubin. . . Her mild spirit began to sink under her misfortunes. She could not write to her betrayer, not knowing his address. She summoned courage to go to the chateau, and begged to be allowed an interview with madame; but the porter shut the door in her face, asking how she presumed to present herself, after her abominable conduct!

This was more than Rose could endure. Taking her baby in her arms, she quitted the village, and earned her subsistence in the different towns through which she passed, by singing. After a long and wearysome journey, she arrived in Paris. Her first care was to seek the abode of her seducer, to whom she gained admittance. He was alone, and though surprised, seemed glad to see her ; admired the child, and asked a few trifling questions ; yet he appeared rather embarrassed : his manner was kind, but constrained ; the mystery was soon solved by the appearance of a lacquey, who informed him that the countess was waiting breakfast.

“ Rose shrieked out, ‘ You are married, then ! ’ To which the count silently assented ; and without another word, the poor deluded girl left the house. She wandered about the streets of Paris, without home or habitation. At last I met with her, and finding by her simplicity that she was a *paysanne*, and did not know what to do, I took her to my chamber,



and hired an additional room for her and the infant, who, you see, is now a thriving creature. Singing had hitherto been a profitable concern, so I advised her to continue that in which she succeeded. You cannot think what a good soul she is ; but I believe her health is but indifferent, and sometimes fear that singing in the open air at night, may be prejudicial to her lungs ; besides, she frets, although she appears resigned, and never mentions St. Aubin's name. I only wonder she never seeks to upbraid him with his perfidy."

The energy with which the *bouquetière* pronounced the last sentence extracted a smile, and a slight pressure of the well-formed but sun-burnt little hand that presented the nose-gay, with Parisian grace. On applying for a ticket, I found that the Varietés was full, and in self-defence was compelled to make out my evening elsewhere.

St. Aubin happened to be an acquaintance of mine ; he was a most agreeable person, and his wife was a charming woman. Poor Rose was

doubly to be pitied ; and I could not help thinking the story over. About three weeks after this occurrence, I was still undecided in my movements, when, seeking to discover the abode of an Englishman with whom I had some trifling business, I was directed towards a shabby-looking house, in an obscure street, and had not proceeded far up the dark narrow stair-case, so common in Paris, when my ears were assailed by the cries of a child. I followed the sound, which issued from an apartment *au cinquième*, and pushed open a door, which stood ajar — and beheld Rose, supported by the *bouquetière*, the little girl crying in a corner. I paused on the threshold ; — Rose was still interesting, but she was dying.

“ Oh monsieur, it is you ! ” cried my friend Aimée, the dispenser of sweets ; “ I am so glad ! — did you really mean to find us out ? Poor Rose is so ill ; she has broken a blood-vessel. I can do nothing for her ; the doctor says she will die ! ” . . . She burst into tears, whilst Rose smiled serenely, and pressed her hand.

“Nor can I do much, my excellent little Aimée; but this poor babe makes a shocking noise, and must disturb an invalid,” returned I, as a sudden thought occurred to me of benefiting the child, for I saw the mother was past human skill.

“Rosette, dont cry, dear!” said Aimée, “or you will be sent away. Oh, monsieur! if men only knew . . .”

I gave her a reproving look, and requested to be allowed permission to take the little girl with me, promising to return in a couple of hours with my charge.

“You are very good,—too good; but we can never spare our little Rosette,” observed Aimée, whom I drew aside in order to explain my project, and the acquaintance that existed between myself and St. Aubin.

She caught at the idea, and replied aloud, that if I would return faithfully with the infant, she did not think Rose would object . . . The poor mother assented with tears in her eyes.—It was not necessary to give my address, for

Aimée already knew my hotel, and the number of my chamber, having brought . . . bouquets, and . . . I do not recollect what besides ; — no matter ; she was aware of my address, although I had most unintentionally stumbled on hers.

I took my young charge in a hackney coach, and succeeded in quieting its apprehension, long before we reached the superb hotel de St. Aubin. I was ushered into the saloon ; the count and countess were *tête à tête*. This was rather *mal a-propos*, and I felt in a dilemma. Both expressed their pleasure at seeing me, and surprise at my strange but engaging companion.

“ *Mon Dieu !*” observed the countess, “ how like this little creature appears to the child I admired a few days since on the Boulevard. I verily believe it is the same.”

I looked at St. Aubin. He coloured and turned pale immediately.

“ The mother of this baby is dying,” returned I ; “ and I have taken a liking to it.”

“ Indeed,” exclaimed madame ; “ I am sure it is the same little girl with the tamburine. Do

you not recollect the mother, St. Aubin ? She sang so sweetly that you absolutely shed tears. Do you not remember how ill she was, and so pale, particularly when I noticed the child ? Mothers' hearts are so susceptible, you know, of any little attention."

St. Aubin hid his face.

"This poor infant has no protector," said I ; "and being an Englishman on my travels, what can I do for it ?"

"Leave the *chère petite* with me," cried madame, affectionately drawing the little on towards her.

"Leonie, my wife, my beloved !" exclaimed the count, falling on his knees before her, "hear me, if you can ; — I am its father ! . . . . could you forgive me ?"

This amiable woman betrayed considerable agitation, and wept frequently during a conversation that proved St. Aubin rather the victim of impulse, than the calculating seducer. It appeared from his own account, that he was not of age at the time of meeting Rose ; that

he was romantic enough to entertain intentions of marrying, and positively hoped to obtain his father's consent ; but on arriving in Paris, he was carried away by the persuasions of his friends, who ridiculed the idea of his marrying a country girl whom he had seduced. At this time his father introduced him to the beautiful Leonie, in the hope that her charms would have the desired effect of obliterating all traces of his former attachment. The beauty and excellences of the countess naturally prevailed : St. Aubin married, and forgot Rose. As he concluded, the affectionate, but tearful Leonie put forth her hand, with a sweet smile, saying, "I will forget all, on one condition."

"Name it, my beloved !" exclaimed he, with eagerness.

"That you will give me full permission to rear this innocent child."

St. Aubin folded his wife to his bosom. I seldom felt more truly happy than at that moment.

Madame accompanied me to Rose's humble

apartment, in hopes of offering relief; but it was too late. She had already breathed her last in the arms of the gentle and kind hearted Aimée.

## CHAPTER V.

Rêver, c'est le bonheur,—attendre, c'est la vie:  
 Courses, pays lointains! voyages! folle envie—  
 C'est assez d'accomplir le voyage éternel;  
 Tout chemin ici-bas vers un but de mystère.

VICTOR HUGO.

En traversant la France,  
 Je visitai ces murs, berceaux de mon enfance,  
 Morne et le cœur navré, j'entendis les roseaux  
 Murmurer tristement au pieds de leurs creneaux,  
 Que de fois, à ce bruit, j'ai revé sous les hêtres.

. . . . .

Le fer les a détruits, ces témoins de mes jeux,  
 Le vieux manoir détruit tombe et perit comme eux,  
 L'herbe croit dans ses cours . . .

CASIMIR DE LA VIGNE, *Louis XI. tragédie.*

A FEW days after this occurrence, I began to entertain serious thoughts of returning to England. Two years' absence had sufficed to blunt the painful acuteness of youthful sensibility. I resolved on resuming my profession, and again



entering upon the scene of life as an active and intelligent agent.

I had seen nothing of St. Elme since the transaction of the gaming-house ; he had evidently avoided me, and I gave up all prospect of ever being repaid the sum I had advanced to his necessities. Through the medium of indifferent persons, I learned that he still persevered in the same course, alternately the favourite or the victim of chance.

Tired of Paris and its gaieties, I soon determined on quitting it ; and accordingly proceeded to Havre-de-Grace by steam, being desirous of following the beautiful and intricate windings of the Seine, which may be deemed a neglected if not a calumniated river ; no one, excepting Bernardin de St. Pierre, having ever thought proper to eulogize its silvery and meandering waters. Now *I* like, *I love* the Seine ! Below Paris its banks assume a varied and highly picturesque aspect which gradually acquires a certain grandeur as the traveller approaches the antiquated city of Rouen.

Rouen, the ancient capital of Normandy, with its narrow streets, gothic houses, and splendid churches, is scarcely less interesting than the classic town of Cologne. The matchless cathedral possesses an unspeakable charm in my estimation; independent of its sublime architecture, its towers and pinnacles, or the hallowed solemnity of the dim aisles, the noble associations connected with it, render this venerable pile an object of research and historical pride to every English visitor. The most chivalrous events of our national history are blended with its mouldering walls. It was constructed by the English, and brings to the imagination a host of noble recollections, of ancestral glory, and the days of conquest when Henry V. of England was crowned king of France. Much romantic interest is also attached to the finely carved gallery yet extant in the Place de la Pucelle d'Orleans, from whence a most iniquitous tribunal beheld the barbarous execution of an unjust sentence, on an innocent and courageous enthusiast.

The life and death of Jeanne D'Arc is replete with dramatic situations; and were it not for its sad and heart-rending conclusion, might almost pass for the creation of poetry, instead of the stern reality of historical fact. The high round tower in which this unfortunate victim of cruelty and superstition pined in hopeless captivity is yet to be seen in the garden of the Ursuline Convent; and a ring that formerly adorned the warlike hand of the heroic maiden is still preserved by the Lady Abbess. These simple memorials of a persecuted but truly patriotic female inspired me with more genuine feeling, than half the garish and far-famed monuments of Paris.

The Seine yet rolls rapidly along; the swelling waters remain untinged by the noble blood so often mingled in its stream. Arthur, of Brittany, perished by the hand of a murderer, within the castle now razed to the ground: and the mortal remains of William the Conqueror are mouldering in the vaults of Notre Dame . . . Verily the history of Rouen would

of the river, and the distance, *comme à vapeur*," as far as Honfleur, was a spot of considerable interest: noble views that meet the eye the river, amply repaid the travelling. A little below the mouth of Canteloupe, are seen the ruins of Robert le Diable; and within twomiles of La Bouille, are situated the quarries of Caumont, which on account of extent and antiquity to those

I lingered for some days in the neighbourhood of Honfleur. Yonder, away, and the scenes of my childhood clouded and obscured by a succession of more vivid objects; but

haunts. I found my way through the woods and fields with surprising facility. I needed no guide, no indication ; the instinct of memory, or rather of the heart, was sufficient. The small straggling town, skirting along the base of a majestic cliff, was neither altered nor improved ; the houses retained the same dusky aspect ; the streets preserved the identical and inconvenient sinuosities : if any new buildings had been constructed, they partook of the same style, and occupied the same position ; the very trees in the long stately avenue, which is at once the entrance and the public promenade of Honfleur, had vegetated on in uninterrupted formality. The only change I could observe was, that every place and every object seemed contracted. Hills that had once appeared of gigantic magnitude, were shrunk into the proportions of ordinary landscape ; houses that had inspired me with a sense of capacious ease, now looked diminutive and confined. It was the small end of the telescope applied to the retrospective eye of local attachment.

It was not possible to resist the impulse of visiting Chateau Belle Isle, the residence which had sheltered myself and family for years,—the retreat where my mother had tasted of the brief enjoyment of passion, and had drained the cup of humiliation and sorrow. I went thither with a beating heart; every step was fraught with tender emotion; every tree claimed companionship. I wandered slowly to the tasteless gateway, once a prodigy of architectural magnificence in my infantine estimation. The high narrow pillars were still there, but the outward cement was chipped and broken, displaying the red brick beneath. Armorial bearings, which had graced a small compartment in each, were completely defaced, and the huge mutilated figures of shapeless animals were still rampant on the summit, having merely lost a portion of their original defectiveness of outline. The rain of twenty seasons had nearly washed them into symmetry; the asperity of form which had once distinguished them was lost, and it required at least the practised eye of antiquarian

research to determine to what specific genus they had ever belonged.

The glaring brick chateau, picked out with white, was untouched, unimpaired by time or weather; the cut stone balcony had been kept tolerably clean; the high terrace, ornamented with marble vases, still overlooked the garden, where stiff and ugly rows of yew and box partitioned off the various flower knots; but the terrace was now ruinous in many parts; the vases, once of dazzling purity, were discoloured by damp; and the graceless box hedge-rows had grown far beyond the formal proportions of a French pleasure-ground.

The fish-pond, in other days the object of my especial choice, and of my mother's unwearying solicitude, was stagnant; the gold and silver fish with difficulty struggled to the surface to bask in that sun which corrupted their element whilst it tempted them from its depths. Again I threw in a few crumbs, as I was wont to do; the finny tribe greedily contended for each precious morsel . . . I was a

child once more,—a happy, wayward, truant boy, and I turned round as if expecting the silvery voice of maternal admonition to check my wilful disobedience . . . The playful *jet d'eau* no longer dispersed its rainbow glories around; the wondrous mechanism, which had called forth my juvenile approbation and conjectural scrutiny, was choked with mud, and was out of repair. The bronze naiad had long ceased to pour a fresh supply of water from her vacant urn—it was filled with dust. The dial, however, had resisted and defied the inroads of decay: the unerring index still marked the eventful progress of time to eternity. Ivy twined round its basement; verdigris stained its brazen surface; but the shadow moved on uninterrupted and unchanged.

The heavy, ill-suspended wooden shutters, which closed the lower windows, and prevented my viewing the interior of the apartments, were scorched and blistered by the heat; the hinges were rusted, but still kept a firm hold in the wall of the building. I sat down on the broken



steps leading to the drawing-room, and . . . wept . . . My mother's little self-appropriated flower-border was before me; the gravel-walk was covered with grass; and the fanciful bed, which I remembered to have seen blooming with many-coloured sweetness, appeared over-run with weeds and briars.

I approached the billiard-room, where my father used to teach my infant hands to knock about the balls: it was open, for a storm had evidently broken the door-fastening. The table was going to decay; the green cloth had lost its hue, and was moth-eaten in several places; the window-panes were cracked; some were altogether deficient. Beyond the billiard-room was situated the grassy paddock in which I used to play; where the swing and the see-saw were erected; where the poney sometimes grazed, or was ridden in all the glory of youthful equestrianism; and the faithful Newfoundland dog was dexterously harnessed to a temporary vehicle of my own, or rather of my father's ingenious construction . . . .

Oh memory! . . . memory! . . . Those who had loved me—those whom I had loved—my friends, my companions, my parents . . . were gone — lost — estranged! — the gentle, tender mother, who had taught me words of peace and prayer, was dead! Yet it was here . . . I brushed aside the fast-falling tears as the bustling *concierge*, who had charge of the place, hurried forward to assure me the chateau and property adjoining, was to be sold or let on very reasonable terms, and that the purchaser would find it a most desirable acquisition, as it was in every way calculated for a distinguished family during the *belle saison*.

I looked keenly at the man; he was young and modern in appearance; he was not a portion or parcel of the whole,—not in keeping with the chateau nor its appurtenances:—there was no local attachment, not a single *souvenir* in the business-like face: he had been employed to superintend the demesne and building by the new *propriétaire*. I ventured to ask for his venerable predecessor, whose white hair,

*à l'aile de pigeon*, had, in days of yore, excited my unrepressed merriment. But François . . . was dead ; and his chubby family . . . dispersed.

I threw the man a Napoleon, requesting that the flower-garden might be put in order. I thrust a small branch of myrtle growing near the drawing-room into my bosom. My mother had planted it, and I remembered standing by her side with a tiny watering-pot, proud — so proud of assisting her labours . . .

The *concierge* stared, pocketed the coin, shrugged his shoulders with an air of mingled pity and surprise, and muttered something very like "*Pauvre garçon*," as I stalked off with rapid strides in the direction of *La Côte de Grace*.

This beautiful eminence commands an extensive view of the adjacent country, which is rich in fine park-scenery ; it also overhangs the water, which possesses the combined beauties of river and marine excellence. Towards the north-east, the prospect is bounded by the heights of Cautebec and Harfleur ; to the

north may be observed the thriving and busy town of Havre ; the west opens wide to the blue waves of the British channel, sparkling and heaving in the breeze.

This lovely spot has been sweetly illustrated in Washington Irving's charming sketch of Annette de l'Arbre, and I was full of the poetic descriptions of the transatlantic author, as I wandered up the steep ascent which leads from the little town below, to the grey stone crucifix which crowns its summit. I sat down on the time-worn steps leading to the *Calvaire* ; the evening was closing with a magnificent sunset ; deep red clouds were collecting in the west ; a thousand hues streaked the sky ; the waves, crested with a slight foam, danced in the crimson glare of reflected glory ; the scene was one of majesty and beauty.

Numberless fishing boats studded the bright expanse before me, waiting for a favourable gale and the turn of tide, to clear out into the open sea. I watched their little tactics as they gradually weighed anchor, and spread their

fluttering canvass in the red sunbeams. A sailor boy was standing near me with a spy-glass, and in a fine mellow voice commenced chaunting the following stanzas :

Notre dame de bon secours,  
Du pêcheur ayez souvenance,  
Car nous partons pour un long cours ;  
Mais vous êtes notre espérance.

Notre dame de bon secours.

Le vent se lève,  
L'onde mugit,  
Et sur la grève  
Le flot blanchit.

If faut quitter la plage ;  
Adieu, tout mon bonheur,  
Mon amie, et mon cœur  
Resteront au rivage.  
Notre dame de bon secours.  
Du pêcheur ayez souvenance,  
Car nous partons pour un long cours ;  
Mais vous êtes notre espérance.

Notre dame de bon secours.

Le ciel se voile,  
La clarté fuit,  
Sois notre étoile,  
Pendant la nuit :  
Conduis nous, O, Marie,  
Sur la mer en fureur,

Car tu plains le pêcheur  
Qu'a pleuré son amie.  
Notre dame de bon secours,  
Du pêcheur ayez souvenance  
Car nous partons pour un long cours ;  
Mais vous êtes notre espérance.  
Notre dame de bon secours.

Quand du voyage  
Nous reviendrons,  
A l' hermitage  
Nous vous prierons,—  
Faites, Vierge Marie,  
Que nous y venions tous,  
Et que chacun de nous  
Y trouve son amie.  
Notre dame de bon secours,  
Du pêcheur ayez souvenance  
Car nous partons pour un long cours ;  
Mais vous êtes notre espérance  
Notre dame de bon secours. \*

The sounds melted softly on the ear, and were swept along the shore. The distant boatmen joined faintly in the chorus, as they veered their outward course, and disappeared one by one like specks upon the distant horizon. As

\* The above Barcarole was written by M. G. Moke of Bruges, the friend and translator of that agreeable highwayman, Grattan.—*Editor's Note.*

the melodist ceased, he closed the telescope, and turning from the station he had occupied, touched his straw hat respectfully, and passed on to the Chapelle, where he doubtless intended to offer his evening devotion to the Virgin, who is there adored under the singular but not inappropriate epithet of *L'Etoile de la Mer*.

For the first time in my life, I perceived a shade of superstition stealing over me. There is something touching, something exquisitely soothing in the worship which is habitual to catholic seamen, — and which they address separately to the Madonna. She is the universal patronness and mediatrix of all French and Italian boatmen: they appeal to her on all occasions, and frequently limit their devotional exercises to the romantic service of *La Vierge*.— To her they attribute every gentler influence; and her merciful intercession is supposed to shield from the justice and retributive vengeance of offended Heaven. I almost envied the confiding ignorance of the sailor, who felt that his temporal welfare and eternal salvation

were equally secure through the benign power of the first Christian Mother.

My spirits were depressed. I was on the eve of sailing for my own country; but I expected no welcome on my return,—no friend would hail my arrival.—no hearth blaze in my honour,—no arms would open to receive me,—no beaming eye grow brighter at my approach.

Oh! there is a wretched melancholy in the conviction of being alone . . . of being utterly unheeded, unloved in a world teeming with the elements of kindly association. When we see all those around us employed in the active business of life, and engaged with the tender interests of relationship, we long to participate in their occupations, even in the sorrows of domestic affection, rather than pursue the path of solitude, even though it may be divested of the cutting cares which the duties of family connexions are sure to entail. Yet thus it is. In the very depth of adversity we still enjoy a gleam of satisfaction when we know that we share the pity of a kindred soul, which fondly



clings to ours through all the trials and calamities that surround us, cheering the lowering aspect of circumstances with the patient endurance of unwearied affection.

It is sad to be alone !—alone in the midst of thousands—without a single sentiment in common with the multitude, without one tie of general interest to bind one's lot to that of fellow men. The cenobite may preach, the theorist may dream, the cold calculations of philosophy may attempt to prove the sublimities of solitude, but it is in vain.

True, that we can retire into the hallowed sanctuary of our own communion for a short period with considerable advantage to ourselves and to others ; but selfish indeed must be that nature which denies the bonds of social intercourse, and in the midst of yearning hearts prefers the aridity of its own.

At no epoch does the mind crave the sympathy of others half so strenuously as after encountering the fatigues, dangers, and procrastinations of a journey. People never love

their country so well as on their immediate return from a distant land. I have sometimes coveted the delicious, tumultuous, joyous, and varied emotions of a weather-beaten traveller approaching once more the peaceful home of adolescence,—that home which proved the object of daily thoughts and nightly supplication,—the goal of desire, and the tutelary ray which has conducted him through the difficulties of life and the gloom of despondency.

What an eternity of feeling is comprised in the brief period of meeting after a prolonged absence! What an eventful moment is that, when every wild conjecture of hope and fear is about to be solved,—when the breathless, half-articulated inquiries crowding on the lips, suspended by alarm, yet uttered with anxiety, are on the eve of being answered in all the plenitude of communicative delight,—when every sanguine expectation is on the very point of being realised! Then there is the awful pause of doubt, the creeping terror, lest those left behind in the glowing vigour of health and

youth, may not have been spared to greet with kindly welcome ; and if yet living, have they remained unscathed by time, unchanged by circumstances, unaltered by care, untouched by disease ?

Oh ! there is a pleasure even in the quick, unanswerable succession of boding fears and evil presentiments . . . which are dispelled at last by the blest assurance that neither poverty, accident, nor temptation has withered the lovely bloom once ardently admired, or estranged the heart to whose constancy the earthly treasure of love was fondly confided.

To me the active, bustling world, seemed a blank,—a wilderness ; the claims of country, and the name of home, were the mere association of accident ; and the voice of welcome, like the empty sound of a receding echo, which mocks the sense, but cannot deceive the understanding.

Kindred, I had none. The scorched plains of France, the orange groves of Italy, or the green hills of England, offered equal shelter to

one who possessed scarcely a single object of interest in the world, excepting Cleveland, with whom I had kept up a correspondence, and from whom only I hoped for a reception.

I landed at Southampton. The aspect of the country was smiling, prosperous, and industrious : it was as I had left it, only improved. Houses had started up ; gardens bloomed around them ; streets were widened ; roads made, and fields enclosed. The genius of the nation may be traced even in the externals ; progression is in every stage, and is stamped on every undertaking.

I looked round at the self-important pre-occupied faces that I met, and wondered that none seemed to know me. As I recognised the neat buildings, the well remembered signs and names, I longed to claim acquaintance and companionship with some one amongst the many hurrying to and fro in the pursuit of pleasure or business, indifferent — nay, unconscious of my very presence.

I rambled to the post office . . . it was a sort

of forlorn hope. For once, I did not meet with disappointment; a letter from Cleveland awaited me. It was of a description to satisfy the most exacting self-love. Nothing could express greater kindness or regard. After a vivid sketch of his domestic felicity, of which it was impossible I could entertain the slightest doubt, he requested that I would make no delay in joining his family circle at Belmont Lodge, where he had resolved on passing the summer months. In this flattering desire for my society, Mrs. Cleveland was so obliging as to join; and the invitation was far too agreeable, for me to think of declining it.

The even tone of Edmund's epistle convinced me of his real cheerfulness: he was evidently pleased with his destiny, and continued still enamoured of his wife. Expressing unfeigned gratification at the prospect of our approaching meeting, he kindly reverted to the probability of my resuming my profession, for which, through all circumstances, I had retained a strong predilection. This was the vibrating

chord in my heart; it might have been loosened by events, but was not torn asunder. Edmund struck it with a gentle touch, and brought forth a responsive feeling, which rather raised my self-esteem to its former scale, than produced a return of bitterness. Thus he proved himself a skilful analyst of the human breast: a less practised hand might have jarred the contending elements within; whereas, he judiciously stimulated the latent powers of action.

I was anxious to make the acquaintance of his wife, being certain that he was incapable of forming an erroneous choice, and was calculated in himself to render any rational woman perfectly happy. I longed to witness his fire-side comforts, and the quiet indulgence of domestic affection, for which he seemed pre-eminently fitted. A man is so different when leading a life of listless independence to what he may be when subject to the benevolent influence of matrimonial restraint.

This often produces a marked change in the

outward manner and pursuits, — even in the temper of many individuals, according to the various dispositions and preponderating causes. These changes are either for better or for worse; like the chemical effects of different elements acting upon each other, so the union of opposite characters may prove conducive to their amelioration or disadvantage. The first requisite in marriage is a prudent selection; the second is to remedy a bad one by infusing as much personal forbearance as will keep the balance even.

Mrs. Cleveland was to me rather an object of interest than curiosity; for her husband had described her with sufficient accuracy to satisfy the cravings of the latter propensity. I knew her exact height, within a quarter of an inch; the colour of her hair and eyes, the curve of her nose, the dimensions of her mouth; the symmetry of her waist, and the miniature proportions of her foot. I had even a tolerable notion of her tastes and opinions, and could consequently form a rough estimate of the sort of woman she was likely to be, and was morally convinced

that the person who could attract and ultimately retain the admiration and love of Edmund Cleveland was not an ordinary being.

Belmont Lodge, situated in the south of Devon, at a very short distance from Desmond Hall, was near the sea-coast; the adjacent scenery was highly picturesque, and to me fraught with deepest interest and early association. I rejoiced at the prospect of being again in the immediate neighbourhood of that spot which once had been my home; to linger near that wild and beautiful demesne which had been the theatre of many a boyish prank, of many a solitary ramble, was a melancholy gratification; and my heart beat with a sentiment of pleasure not unmixed with sadness, as my humble post-chaise turned swiftly from the dusty high road to the cool avenue which led with various windings to the pretty rustic gate-house decorating the approach to Belmont Lodge.

It was spring, and sufficiently early in the afternoon to allow the full benefit of a Devonshire prospect boasting all the fresh and balmy



verdure of English landscape. There is something charming in the neat hedge-rows, white-washed cottages, and tasteful flower gardens, which possess an unobtrusive style of beauty, that is never more truly appreciated than by those who have lately returned from the Continent.

Primroses, daisies, and gaudy buttercups spangled the lawn; violets opened their blue eyes under the shade of waving laburnums, that fell in golden showers on the grassy bank beneath. The transient lilac of various hues, the honey-suckle, sweet-briar and early-rose seemed struggling for pre-eminence in the shrubbery that flourished in fragrant luxuriance on one side of the house; the other being adorned with an elegant veranda, from whence a sloping grass-plot led gradually to a rippling stream, over which at a short distance was thrown a rustic bridge.

I had no time to make farther topographical observations, on the localities and capabilities of Belmont; the hall door being opened long

before my slender equipage had reached the flight of steps leading to it. Cleveland rushed forward to greet me. Happiness had added to his good looks, contentment and cheerfulness beamed in his face, as he warmly shook me by the hand, and conducted me to his study, where we remained talking and debating over our respective concerns and adventures, until the reiterated peal of the dinner bell summoned us to the necessary duties of the toilet.

## CHAPTER VI.

Je te donne un seul besoin,	L'Amour.
Une seule occupation,	L'Amour.
Un seul devoir,	L'Amour.
Une seule recompense,	L'Amour.

*French Aphorism.*

True love's the gift which God has given  
To man alone, beneath the heaven.

It is not fantasies' hot fire  
Whose wishes soon as granted fly :  
It liveth, not in fierce desire,  
With dead desire it doth not die.

It is the secret sympathy,  
The silver link, the silken tie,  
Which heart to heart, and mind to mind,  
In body and in mind can bind.

SIR W. SCOTT, *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

BEING neither an exquisite nor a bridegroom,  
I had soon completed the harmony of my  
external decorations, and quitted my dressing-

room before Cleveland left his. I proceeded to the *salon*, intending to await the expected introduction to my hostess without exhibiting impatience. On opening the door, I descried the figure of a lady standing near the window: her back was turned towards me, but there was no mistaking the contour of the head, or the braided hair, so glossy, so attractively elegant.

“Miss Vyvian!” exclaimed I; “or Mrs.—”

“Not Mrs. Cleveland, I assure you,” interrupted Emily, presenting her tiny hand with frankness equally removed from affectation as from coquetry; smiling at the same time with an expression of sweet satisfaction that brought the colour to my sun-burnt cheek.

“This is indeed an unexpected pleasure,” cried I; “it is more than I hoped for.”

“And more, perhaps, than you deserve,” replied she, archly; “but I am glad *you* consider this meeting a pleasure,” continued she with emphasis.

“To *me* it is the greatest gratification that circumstances could offer; and of all people,

Miss Vyvian has no right to question the delight every one must experience in her society."

"I confess," answered she, "that your arrival is no surprise, although exceedingly agreeable to myself as well as to the Clevelands. I knew you were coming, and really think you might have managed to be here an hour earlier," continued she, pointing to a beautiful French pendule on the point of striking seven.

"That the presence of an humble individual like myself should be an event ever anticipated by you, Emily," observed I with increasing emotion, "is more flattering than, probably, you will choose to believe."

"Once for all, Mr. Harcourt, I am very glad to see you, and express my sorrow that you left Hastings so unceremoniously, without even taking leave of the Herberts, or wishing me farewell. We never heard your departure hinted at until you had reached London. I assure you it was not kind. I had almost accused you of ingratitude."

I looked with inquiring scrutiny at her clear, noble brow: all there was candid, innocent, and confiding.

“ You never received my last note ? ” said I, dubiously.

“ Did you write to *me*, Mr. Harcourt ? ” exclaimed Emily, with a quivering lip.

I was about to explain the depth of my disappointment, and the presumptuous hopes which once had led me to her presence, when all further conversation was suspended by the entrance of Cleveland, who observed, with a smile,

“ I thought you would be glad to meet your old acquaintance, Harcourt. I am truly happy to find that I was not mistaken.”

“ Emily looked excessively confused, which added materially to her beauty; whilst I stepped forward with becoming celerity to go through the forms of introduction with Mrs. Cleveland, who, though not strikingly handsome, was peculiarly interesting and lady-like, exactly the person he had described, and what

I should have expected him to choose from amongst all the varieties of the female kind. The social repast was enlivened by much conversation; but I perceived that neither Emily nor myself was inclined to do honour to the culinary perfections of the *maitre d'hotel*. I was too happy either to eat or to drink; the delicacies of the table circulated untasted, and I had nearly omitted the courtesy of asking the ladies to take wine. The evening was spent most delightfully; the hours flew, and twelve o'clock had already arrived ere we thought of separating.

Sleep is a capricious sort of refreshment, which eludes extremes of all kinds. The couch of the wretched and happy, are alike seldom visited by repose; and it is only after the excitement of feeling has subsided, that the balm of slumber seals the heavy eyelids in sweet oblivion. In vain I called the aid of reality and reason to quiet the tumultuous agitation of my breast; the hours of darkness were passed in wakeful consciousness of present felicity. I

arose early, in secret hopes of meeting Emily before breakfast, and I was not disappointed; she had already commenced her embroidery when I entered the drawing-room. The conversation of the preceding day was eagerly resumed by my saying,—

“It is very singular, Miss Vyvian, that my last letter was not received by you.”

“There has been some mistake,” returned she, “or I have been deceived . . .” A flash of indignation illuminated her features as she spoke.

“Perhaps not,” said I, solemnly. “Your guardian, Lord Glenmore, was at Hastings, and from him I was led to believe that my visits would no longer be tolerated by Mr. Herbert or himself. Motives of delicacy prevent my showing you his lordship’s communication, which decided at once my departure for the Continent. I presumed to scribble a few hurried lines previous to my miserable journey, hoping to obtain some answer or token of remembrance; but your continued silence gave



me every reason to apprehend that my correspondence was not welcome. Oh, Emily! with what delight I should have hailed the most distant prospect of conveying my ideas and sentiments to you."

"It is very strange that Lord Glenmore dictated to *you*, Mr. Harcourt!" exclaimed Emily, with some surprise.

"I conceived that, as your guardian, he was authorised by law to do so," replied I; "as such only I obeyed him..."

"True, he was my guardian," interrupted she; "but whatever legal power he exerted over *my* actions, he possessed none over yours."

"That conviction encouraged me to address you, dear Miss Vyvian," cried I; "being resolved to receive my sentence from your own hand. With agony I awaited the result of my appeal: it remained unanswered, from which I drew the melancholy inference that my acquaintance was no longer desirable."

"Good heavens! . . . do you think that

Augustus could be capable of suppressing your note ?” inquired my companion.

“It is not for me to prejudge Lord Glenmore,” said I, with a sickening sense of humiliation. “The last time we met he was in close conversation with you, and I have every reason to suppose that my misfortunes were the subject of that conversation.—Emily, I have been unfortunate from my birth ; the BAR-SINISTER opposes its fatal influence to every hope in life : add not your contempt to the mass of contumely which has hitherto overwhelmed me.”

“Harcourt,” replied Emily calmly, “let us adjourn this painful discussion. Lord Glenmore’s conduct towards you has not raised him in my estimation ; but he is a relative of mine.”

A deep sigh escaped us both. I felt again that circumstances separated me from the lovely woman before me, — that I was a mere adventurer, and had no right to presume beyond the honour of her notice.”

“The earl is a very near connexion of yours ?” inquired I, in breathless expectation.

“To my sorrow,” rejoined Miss Vyvian. “Harcourt, I have suffered much on his account, or rather through his means. Augustus is neither loved nor respected by me; but his vices give me infinite pain. Do you know that she, who was once my friend and . . . yours,” added she, hesitating, — “Lady St. Elme, — is now living at Desmond Hall.”

“So near us!” exclaimed I, starting and turning pale with surprise.

“Poor Anastasia! little did we anticipate her destiny,” observed Miss Vyvian; “so lovely, so gentle, so kind. Do you know, Harcourt, I often think of our former intimacy, and our days of confiding friendship.”

“And is Glenmore with her?” said I, in a voice of anguish.

“Oh no,” returned Emily; “she is a perfect recluse, and in wretched health.”

“Lost! lost Anastasia!” murmured I.

“I have not spoken to Lord Glenmore since,” observed Emily. “His cruel profligacy was quite sufficient to authorise me to withdraw from all communication with him.”

My agitation was so great that I scarcely heeded the amiable girl as she continued — “How beautiful, how brilliant, the viscountess was at Hastings! she is now quite another creature.”

My conscience rose in accusation against me.

“Lord St. Elme is in Paris,” added Emily, as I nodded a silent assent.

“Have you seen Anastasia,” said I, grasping her hand fervently, — “have you seen her since the lamentable hour she accepted Glenmore’s protection.”

Tears suffused her downcast eyes; her colour varied as she replied firmly, “I have, — I could not refuse, — I could not steel my heart against the touching appeal of former kindness, — I could not forget the happy hours once passed in her society; the recollection of her excellences could not be obliterated at once; I may perhaps have erred: I have countenanced guilt; I have visited the frail victim of seduction; but I hope I have not forfeited my own integrity by so doing . . . . The world may judge harshly of

me . . . . but *you*, Charles, you will not think ill of me because I attended the sick bed of your suffering . . . ”

“ My sister ! ” exclaimed I, interrupting her, “ you know all, then, — all that I dreaded ? ”

“ All ! — all that concerns you and yours, ” said she, looking down with evident embarrassment.

“ You have, then, conversed with my hapless erring sister ? Oh, Emily ! how can I express my admiration, my gratitude, my tenderness, ” cried I, pressing her hand to my lips fervently.

“ I went to administer comfort at Lady St. Elme’s repeated request. It was not from presumption or officiousness ; it was in obedience to the dictates of former friendship — in the earnest hope of raising her thoughts to another and a better world, and to guide her affections towards that Being who alone can know the strength of temptation and the weakness of human principle, and from whose mercy alone forgiveness can be expected or atonement made. ”

I covered my face with my hands : the burning blush of shame mantled on my brow, and

the bitter tear of self-reproach furrowed my cheek. "Anastasia is unhappy, then," exclaimed I, involuntarily.

"None can be more truly so," replied Emily; "for Glenmore deserted her almost as soon as she was in his power, and the sting of remorse is sharpened by the anguish of disappointment. In a moment of weakness she had sought refuge from poverty and the cruelty of her husband, expecting to receive that tribute of love and homage to which her beauty and graces entitled her; but the illusion was quickly dispelled, and she discovered, to her mortification and eternal regret, that if the path of virtue be stripped of flowers, the ways of error are strewn with thorns."

Our conversation was too interesting to be soon relinquished; and we continued for some time discussing a subject equally painful, yet equally dear to us both. Need I say, that it was frequently renewed; and in consequence of Emily's presence, and the Clevelands' kind solicitations, I was induced to prolong my stay

at Belmont Lodge, far beyond the time usually allotted even to visits of friendship.

Weeks passed rapidly away in delightful pursuits congenial to my tastes and habits. We rode, walked, and fished in fine weather; reading, sketching, and the conservatory filled up the rainy days: and our evenings were frequently graced by the addition of some neighbouring families, with whom the Clevelands were on a dinner-giving footing; and some of the military quartered at the nearest town, completed a circle which contained the essence of every thing that was agreeable to me. So that between music, quadrilles, flirting, chess-playing, and talking, we did not fear the approach of ennui.

I found Cleveland's wife a charming companion. She improved greatly on acquaintance, which may in itself be considered as a proof of innate worth. Although rather timid, the amiability of her disposition soon broke through the slight shade of reserve perceptible in her character. It was easy to discover that she possessed vast and varied powers of enter-

tainment, and that her mind was highly cultivated. Amongst other advantages, she possessed a remarkable talent for reading; and certainly the gift of expressing with emphasis and sensibility the beautiful creations of the poet and the philosopher, cannot be sufficiently prized. It has often occurred to me that the object of modern education is strangely misunderstood, and certainly very inadequate to the laboured means through which it is usually attained. Parents are apt, both in the tuition of boys and girls, to attach great importance to those accomplishments which through life will be of least service in the direction of their actions, or in conducing to the pleasures of others.

Latin and Greek are the *summum bonum* of masculine acquirements, and every wretched dunce is tortured into the forced production of a few cramped Latin verses, at the same time it is probable that he cannot write a familiar letter in his own language, or explain the power of the lever or the principle of a pump; much less be acquainted with the laws and constitu-



tion of his own country: and whilst endeavouring to retain the classical names of a heathen pantheon, is totally unconscious of those glorious characters that have illustrated the pages of our national history, and exalted the greatness and goodness of a revealed religion.\*

Young ladies, on the other hand, are expected to be excellent French and Italian scholars,—to dance well,—to draw with facility, and, to crown all, spend hours at the pianoforte. In short, music is considered the primary object. The loss of time, the loss of temper, is lamentable. Often have I regretted seeing girls,—otherwise sufficiently clever to go through life with credit to themselves and family,—sicken with disgust over the black pages of a variated air, which it is probable a fourth-rate professional will ultimately execute in much better style. Supposing even this laudable desire of

\* Since writing the above, I have found these opinions much better expressed, and more fully developed, in that exceedingly popular little book, "The Brunnens of Nassau:" happy at the coincidence, I only beg to acquit myself of the imputation of plagiarism.—C.

transforming a daughter, meant to adorn the peaceful shade of retirement, into a musical star of the first magnitude, be attained, and this "tenth muse" is dragged about to display her hard-earned acquirements in various parties, what is the important result? People are civil enough to pay a few unmeaning and indispensable compliments; but the harassed performer, and the magnificent *concerto*, which has absorbed days, weeks, and months of hard study, are both immediately forgotten.

In domestic life music is perfectly useless, unless considered, like cards, as a pastime. The invalid, or peevish husband, the sick child, the care-worn father, or the anxious mother, are not to be soothed with the chromatic difficulties of thorough bass. Teach your daughters to Believe, to reflect, to act; and then teach them to select their studies and pursuits, with a due regard to the responsibility with which the employment of time is intrusted to them, and with a fitting desire to promote the happiness of their intimate circle.

Emily Vyvian and Mrs. Cleveland had been school-fellows, and were much attached: this, if possible, was an additional reason for me to value the excellent qualities of the latter, who was becoming an object of increased interest and anxiety to us all. Edmund was evidently in hopes of being a father, and his thankfulness on this occasion was only counterbalanced by his solicitude for his wife. They united in paying me the compliment of requesting that I would stand sponsor to the expected stranger, conjointly with Miss Vyvian. Such a flattering distinction was not to be declined, and in consequence of these agreeable arrangements my sojourn in Devonshire was protracted *ad libitum*.

In the meanwhile my unshaken affection for Emily became more deeply rooted than ever. Constantly in her society, I yielded myself entirely to the pleasure of admiring and loving her. Emily was no coquette, and would not, for the empty vanity of misleading a lover, allow the continuation of assiduities she intended subsequently to reject.

I began to hope that a reciprocal feeling existed, as it was clear that Lord Glenmore had suppressed my last note. Depending on my own peculiar feelings for the success of his enterprise, he felt certain that I should not renew the attempt at correspondence, and that his presence in Hastings would be sufficient to accelerate my departure. The result was favourable to his anticipations; and had it not been for Cleveland's never-failing kindness, Emily and myself would still have remained "far as the poles asunder."

Every hour brought with it a fresh conviction of her worth and excellence of temper and principle. Her attentions to the suffering Lady St. Elme, who was still at Desmond Hall, partook of a mild, dignified, and christian character, calculated to soothe the lacerated feelings of Anastasia, and raise Miss Vyvian in the estimation of all around. She won my most tender gratitude; and nothing but a sense of inferiority,—the conviction that I was unable to place her in the sphere for which she was in-

tended, prevented my imploring the honour of her hand.

Augustus was still absent, whilst the victim of his artifices remained in solitary wretchedness in the house where he had left her with reckless indifference. From grief and despondency, she had sunk into a state of nervous irritability, which threatened to annihilate the faculties of her once accomplished mind. Had it not been for the consolation and sympathy evinced by Emily, she must have yielded to the combined influence of sorrow, seclusion, and despair ; for however a life of retirement may accord with the pursuits of a virtuous woman, it is in itself one of the first punishments which outraged society has decreed against its faulty members.

In this, as in many other instances, how different Miss Vyvian's conduct must appear to that of the generality of women, with whom

" Every woe a tear can claim,  
Except an erring sister's shame."

Content and happy in her own innocence and purity of conduct, she did not seek to raise the

edifice of her own elevated character on the mouldering ruins of her friends' reputation. She was unable to nourish any sentiment beyond that of commiseration: all respect and esteem had long been uprooted, the society of the viscountess had lost every charm that could satisfy or invite the communion of a graceful mind. It was a sense of duty which alone impelled Emily to the presence of the once dear friend who had fallen so low in the scale of degradation. Probably, had she continued the gay fascinating enchantress, — had she continued with unblushing prosperity in the career of shame, Miss Vyvian would have shrunk from the contamination; but the heart-broken, neglected victim of seduction, the half-bewildered and deserted wife of St. Elme, claimed her pity and her forbearance. Besides which, she felt that she possessed a higher object in view, than the mere temporal benefit which the viscountess might derive from her considerate attentions.

With gentle and unobtrusive piety she en-

deavoured to fix the agitated mind of Anastasia on those hopes and bright promises which shine alike upon the righteous and the fallen, and which the world can neither give nor take away.

From a sentiment of propriety, I never sought an interview with my sister, as I conceived it would be inconsistent with the delicacy of our respective positions ; but I was too deeply interested in her fate, not to collect with avidity every circumstance relating to her. As it had always been stated, Anastasia was far less to blame than her husband, who, from all accounts, had actually proved the artificer of his own ruin and dishonour. Augustus had evidently taken advantage of the difficulties in which he had involved St. Elme to complete the destruction of the beautiful and unprotected viscountess.

My obvious attachment to Emily could no longer remain secret, even to herself. I still hesitated to involve her youth and elegance in the humiliating circumstances to which I was constantly exposed, and should perhaps have

lingered on in respectful silence, had not Cleveland brought matters to a most satisfactory conclusion. As we were walking together inspecting the progress of his new plantations, in which he took a commendable pride, he broached the subject himself, by inquiring if I positively intended dawdling on a bachelor's life to the end of time.

"Indeed, Edmund," answered I, "it is difficult for me to presume making an offer. I am too poor to marry, and too proud to seek a fortune with a wife."

"But," returned Cleveland, "is there no woman with present independence and future prospects, who might suit your views? I am so happy myself, that I fain would lead all my friends to the hymeneal altar. You must be very wilful, my dear Charles, to persevere in such an unpromising resolution."

"Do not tease me," said I, peevishly; "I shall never marry."

"Very well, Harcourt, I shall certainly inform Mrs. Cleveland of your laudable inten-



tions. We shall naturally conclude you had a *passion malheureuse* on the other side of the water,—some dark-eyed signora,—eh, Charles?”

“For God’s sake, Cleveland, let me alone: do not keep provoking me with such nonsense. I care for nobody.”

“And nobody cares for you, I suppose,” added Cleveland, archly.

“Nobody indeed cares for me, I believe,” returned I, despondingly.

“So you are not quite convinced of the truth conveyed in your first assertion; but I think it right Mrs. Cleveland should be informed in time,” continued he, smiling; “however, we shall soon have a christening, and one ceremony is often the precursor of another.”

“Now, Edmund,” said I, “knowing the miserable circumstances in which I am placed, how can you have the heart to banter? Who would marry me, even if I did venture to propose?”

“Plenty,—plenty of girls would jump at

such a match," returned Edmund, laughing. "Let me see—handsome, or, very interesting,—that is the correct phrase,—clever,—intellectual (I should say),—an author,—several works already printed,—why that very circumstance would ensure you a good connexion; and what is more, I really thought the youngest Miss Dashwood, the rich West Indian co-heiress, looked most approvingly last night, when you were exhibiting the sketches brought from Italy."

"Once for all," exclaimed I, "you shall not tease me. I hate Miss Dashwood!"

"Oh, you *hate her*, do you?" said Cleveland, with a provoking look that nearly upset my ill temper. "Why she is quite young; and yesterday, you acknowledged she was pretty. She is rich enough in all conscience!"

"Granted! but then she has no mind," answered I,—"*quite a lazy Creole.*"

"Well, then, there is the rector's daughter. She is clever and intellectual,—arts, sciences, conchology, entomology, chronology, zoology,

and, I dare say, physiology, all at her fingers ends,—a match for you, or any man breathing.”

“Heavens and earth! Cleveland,” said I, in a deprecating tone; “a *blue* of the deepest water,—of the most unbecoming shade;—that most odious variety of the female species which, having lost all its native softness, yet remains destitute of the energies and stern virtues that characterize mankind. She is worse than her father’s interminable sermons.”

“No pleasing you, Mr. Harcourt, I perceive,” observed Edmund, with a funny look. “*One* is insipid, another a *blue*; perhaps the city banker’s daughter, who was at Mrs. Cleveland’s last party, might strike your roving fancy: her father is going to represent the borough of —— next election, in despite of the Glenmore interest. She is an only child.”

“Fie! fie! Edmund: she is all bustle and flounce,—gold chains, artificial flowers, with those immense ear-rings, which make her look like an Iroquois!—then that atrocious forest

of frizzy curls, making such a formidable head! You know my aversion to large, ill-shaped pericraniums."

"And you do not approve of curls," murmured Cleveland, "or ear-rings.—I see how it is,—or large heads.—Poor fellow!—your own numskull seems rather obtuse on this occasion. I think Miss Vyvian wears her hair braided, and does not patronise those monstrous ear-rings which seem to excite your ire to such an unjustifiable degree."

"Good God! Edmund," interrupted I, "do not mix *her* name with such a horde . . . ."

"Of fierce barbarians!" interrupted Cleveland. "Now, Harcourt, be serious; you are fond of Emily,—you are attached to her?"

"I am ;—fondly, devotedly attached. She is every thing I could love, honour, and respect. My sentiments are unalterable: perhaps my affection is more ardent than at the time I quitted England."

"And you will not marry her?" observed Edmund.

“ I dare not,—I cannot. What can I say,—what can I offer? She is the cousin of Lord Glenmore,—his ward. I am fettered in every way.”

“ Emily has attained her majority,” said Cleveland. “ Yet her consanguinity to the earl may perhaps be an obstacle in your estimation?”

“ A reason that she should despise me,” returned I.

“ Miss Vyvian is perfectly independent of her cousin, and the small fortune she now possesses is at her own disposal.”

“ But could she ever consent to bind her fate to mine?” said I; “ I have no name, no station, no property: just enough to live upon,—no more. Then, Edmund, she may have prejudices. I have no family to receive my bride,—no means of introducing her to a society in which she would shine. I cannot ask Miss Vyvian to give up all her hopes and prospects,—to consign her youth, her talents, and her beauty, to the obscurity of love in a

cottage. I love her too well, too *sincerely*, to exact such a sacrifice."

"But," observed Edmund, "Emily loves *you* too well and too sincerely, to decline an offer so conducive to her happiness and congenial to her taste."

"You do not really believe," said I, "that Miss Vyvian would accept me?"

"Try:—that is my best advice, Harcourt. I will just give you time to settle the preliminaries, for we must have the wedding as soon after the christening as my dear little wife's health will permit."

In a few days after this conversation, which opened a bright vista before me, Edmund was the proud and happy father of a beautiful boy; and Mrs. Cleveland, to use the technical phrase, was as well as could be expected.

To our great delight, she recovered rapidly, and soon graced the domestic circle with her presence. She was a charming exemplification of what a wife and mother ought to be. A single woman, indeed, has no suspicion of the

most delicious sentiments of which the female heart is susceptible. Love always tends towards extremes: it exalts to enthusiasm, or it degrades to error. Filial piety may possess some charms, and prescribe many tender duties; but regret too frequently mingles with the sacrifices exacted from obedience; for submission may be painful; but the wife, the mother, are privileged beings. The strength of their passion contains the very essence of their happiness. This truly legitimate love seems given in compensation for those youthful affections so often blighted: it is the crown of their constancy, the goal of their desires; these are bonds to which they cling more strongly from being attached to them; this is a flame that burns brighter as it consumes. Symbol of eternity, it is sustained by its own intensity.

## CHAPTER VII.

Alas, the love of woman ! it is known  
 To be a lovely and a fearful thing ;  
 For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,  
 And if 'tis lost, life has no more to bring  
 To them but mockeries of the past alone ;  
 And their revenge is like the tiger's spring,  
 Deadly, and quick, and crushing : yet as real  
 Torture is theirs—what they inflict they feel.

LORD BYRON, *Don Juan*.

BEFORE the baptism took place, I had already assured myself of Emily's sentiments. She was approaching her twenty-second year, and she felt certain that her excellent friends, the Herberts, would not disapprove of her choice, as it seems Augustus had acted with great caution, and far from associating Mr. Herbert in the affair, had concealed the business entirely from him, being



convinced that his own diabolical power and presence would be sufficient to check my future visits ; and in suppressing my note he had nipped every germ of future correspondence in the bud.

Mr. Herbert had ever expressed a kind feeling of approbation in my regard, and was painfully surprised at my abrupt departure, which remained totally unexplained to the whole party. Augustus had limited his communication to Emily's private ear, and with considerable tact had endeavoured to appear unconscious of the bare supposition of her being attached to such an adventurer as Harcourt. Apparently actuated by zeal for her respectability and happiness, he had cautioned her as to the danger of admitting an individual of such description into her intimacy ; but Emily's clear judgment detected the sordid motives, disguised under a semblance of interest towards herself, and she merely lamented my want of rank and station, inasmuch as it would be detrimental to my prospects in life. Without

the slightest idea of my friendship and correspondence with Cleveland, she had joyfully accepted the friendly invitation to pass the summer at Belmont Lodge. Acting in this, as in all other circumstances, with his accustomed discrimination and delicacy, Edmund had spoken of me with reserve, gradually hinting the probability of my arrival in England, without alarming her feminine modesty. She hailed my approach with sincere pleasure, for the pure simplicity of her well regulated mind harboured no second thought or unmaidenly conjectures. She experienced unfeigned gratification at the prospect thus afforded of renewing a confidential intimacy with an old acquaintance, and had accordingly received my attentions without prudery, without affectation, and without guile, admitting me at once to the delightful privileges and familiarity of an established friend.

At my request and suggestion she wrote a candid statement of my views, wishes, and pecuniary affairs to Mr. Herbert. I could not

contemplate the possibility of using concealment with respect to such valued relatives ; and the favourable answer, received in reply to her important communication, rendered me fully satisfied as to the propriety of the measure adopted. Mr. Herbert's letter contained an unqualified consent and approbation. Need I describe all that passed on the memorable occasion of Miss Vyvian's accepting the homage of my hand and heart ; the soft persuasion exercised on one part, and the still softer acknowledgments on the other ; the womanly reserve and the fervent assurances of affection ; the reiterated vows and half-reluctant promises ?

Oh ! it was a delightful moment when the blushing Emily yielded to my wishes, and, unscared by the terrors of poverty, seemed happy, not only to share my gloomy destiny, but to cheer it with the plenitude of her love. I merely stipulated that her fortune, whatever it might prove, should be secured for herself ; to which Cleveland assented with a smile, and discovered that it was much larger than even report had

asserted ; for Mr. Herbert had discharged his duty more like a parent than a guardian. I do not know if this circumstance gave me pleasure ; provided Emily was happy, — provided she had the comforts to which she was accustomed, I desired not riches ; but I was pleased that she would suffer no privation.

The day appointed for the christening arrived ; I was supremely happy. Emily was charming : white roses graced her dark hair, a white crape hat, placed most becomingly, gave her an air of fashion, without imparting an idea of studied elegance. We went to church in the same carriage with another lady as chaperone. Edmund followed, accompanied by a party consisting of his sisters and his father : grandmamma, the nurse, and child came by themselves, lest cold, or draught, or sun, or dust should affect the youthful heir. Perhaps the immediate vicinity of our god-child would not at that moment have been particularly desirable either to Emily or myself. Fondly and ardently however did we unite our prayers

for the salvation of the little innocent before us, as we stood near the altar. I could not help observing that Miss Vyvian's thoughts had taken the same direction as my own. We were conjecturing the probable result of our approaching union.

Cleveland was supremely happy. As he gazed on the unconscious form of the sleeping boy he had just fondly pressed to his paternal bosom, what a host of teeming thoughts, busy conjectures, and struggling feelings crowded to his heart! It seemed as if a fresh fountain of inexhaustible emotion had sprung up within him, — as if a never-failing source of delight had opened itself before him, — as if every interest, hope, fear and anxiety had taken a new direction and assumed a different form. Edmund was a father for the first time. — How much is comprised in that one brief epithet, which implies the most awful responsibility in life!

The love which we bear towards children is very different from every other variety of affec-

tion that blooms in the human breast. All our numerous social ties are linked with some sentiment that feeds the passion from which love is supposed to emanate. We admire, we esteem, we are grateful, we become attached, we prize some good, some valuable, some captivating quality in the object of our regard. With our offspring the order of things is reversed. We love them by anticipation: it is the delicious union of the real and the ideal; we love them for the perfections we hope they *will* possess; we endow them with those gifts and advantages most in harmony with our own feelings and inclinations; we love them not for what they are, but for what they will be. In them we view the realization of all our dreams and expectations; we see our children, and our fertile imagination adorns them with its own creations. It is the most refined, the most innocent species of egotism and selfishness, emanating from the purest depths of mortal affection. In loving our infants, we love the bright visions of our own fancy; the unformed features which pre-

sent no distinct outline to the casual beholder, promise to the partial eye of a father the future beauty of form and expression. The feeble movements, the half murmured sounds, the very vacancy of the human edifice in miniature, is by them filled up and magnified into the excellences and perfections of coming maturity.

Probably in every other sentiment through life we have all been somewhat disappointed ; and with the cold chill of blighted hope, we gradually discover, one by one, that those we have hitherto cherished are subject to some of the many failings to which humanity is doomed. Our parents, — those first idols of our inexperienced heart, in after years lose their venerable ascendancy. We view them no longer through the distance of our relative positions ; we analyse their characters as fellow-citizens ; their actions are open alike to our comment and to our censure. We are silent from respect ; we lament their errors with sincerity ; but the measure of our love is no longer brimming over with the effervescence of its intensity.

So we go on, loving and being loved unto the end. We revel in its wild delicious varieties ; the sentiment may be pure, as the principle is inexhaustible, but they who share and inspire it never *are*, never *can* be perfect ; and the wearied heart turns fondly to the vivid feelings of parental affection, concentrating on the unconscious object of freshly awakened emotion the essence of all former attachments.

After the solemnity of the baptism was concluded, and the little cherub had received the accustomed meed of praise and kisses, which were neither acknowledged nor accepted very graciously ;—after having discovered that his eyes were like papa's, and his mouth was like mamma's, and the usual quantum of civil nonsense was politely exchanged and circulated, we carefully escorted the nurse and child to the conveyance allotted them, and returned to Belmont Lodge in the same regular order we had left it.

To our great satisfaction, Mrs. Cleveland was sufficiently strong to witness our evening's



amusement, although she felt unable to join in it; her husband was in excellent spirits, and the whole party were eager participators in the happiness of their kind host and hostess.

Emily never appeared to greater advantage. I remarked, with pleasure, that her stature was improved, and gained the bewitching *embonpoint*—not exactly of maturity, but of health. She had acquired more animation, and her sprightliness was strictly graceful. Extreme girlhood had passed away; the *naïveté* of Hastings had in a degree disappeared and made way for the elegance of refinement. She had just seen enough of the world to gain its finest polish without the native jewel losing a particle of its intrinsic worth.

As I watched her speaking countenance and animated expression, I could not refrain from indulging a feeling of pride, or rather gratitude, for the treasure I was about to possess: but it is impossible to paint the tumultuous bliss, the joyous overflowings of thankfulness, and the delightful anticipations which assailed me. I

felt on the threshold of permanent happiness,— on the eve of realizing the ardent hopes which had secretly upheld my drooping heart for three years. Emily had at length consented to abbreviate the term of my probation, and named what I considered a remote period, but what she declared to be the earliest possible day for the irrevocable ceremony which would unite us for ever.

It was on retiring to my chamber on that eventful evening, that I found the following epistle on my dressing table. The handwriting was indeed too familiar to be mistaken. I broke the seal with palpitating heart, and read as follows : —

“ DESMOND HALL, Sept. 183—.

“ If you still retain the recollection of an erring, guilty woman, do not cast this from you ere its contents are engraven on your memory. Charles, we once loved each other ! A fearful barrier existed between us ; yet, if possible, that very barrier renders your welfare still dearer to

me. Low as I am fallen, there is yet hope, not in this world, but in a higher sphere: words of consolation have distilled their healing balm upon my withered soul. In a few days I shall leave Desmond Hall. I only await the arrival of Lord Glenmore, to depart, and retrace my steps,—not to innocence, for that once lost, can never be regained,—but to seek the path of peace and the ways of penitence.

“Emily has pointed out the road of salvation. She says there is joy over a sinner that repenteth, Oh, Charles! if repentance *could* soothe my burning brain!... I am a helpless, forlorn woman; no house is open, no heart will commiserate my condition. You and Emily, perhaps, may not spurn me: you may hold out a protecting hand; but from the rest of mankind I have nothing to expect. Ere I go hence, it is right that I should confide a secret that concerns your welfare. A sense of duty impels me to divulge the strange circumstances that have occurred since we parted.

“Glenmore is a villain!—a villain to us all;

— to you, — to me, — to . . . I cannot trace the name of St. Elme. Whilst we were at Hastings, Charles, the unfortunate viscount lost immense sums to Augustus, who took mortgages and bonds to the amount. Our affairs were deeply involved; and Glenmore was ever ready to advance money and pander to his follies.

“On arriving in town, I found matters had come to a crisis; our creditors were clamorous, a bill of exchange issued by St. Elme was protested, and his honour was implicated to such a degree, that flight was necessary . . .

“At that fatal moment Lord Glenmore offered to discharge the debts, and lured me to accept from him a home, and the luxuries to which I had been accustomed. He *seemed* generous and disinterested; his love for me was urged with fervour and apparent truth; the pecuniary sacrifices he had made to the viscount were enormous. I listened to the tempter, and left the house in B—— Square, already occupied by sheriffs’ officers, and became the com-

panion of Augustus. But I did not love him ; — no, the blind passion which takes root in vanity, and is fostered by flattery, cannot be love. I awakened to a sense of sin and shame. — Glenmore has long ceased to regard me : my health became impaired. There was but one being in the world that I could venture to address. Emily came to my sick-bed ; she laid aside the trammels of worldly prejudice ; she came like a ministering angel : with piety and perseverance she enlightened my darkness. But a great and heavy blow was yet in store. The fearful stroke that has annihilated the last remnant of inward idolatry, was aimed by a strange and mysterious person.

“ A few days since, feeling sufficiently strong to venture into the Park, unattended, tempted by the beauty of the scene, I wandered to a considerable distance from the house, and was not aware of the imprudence of which I had been guilty, until a woman burst from amongst the trees in which she had evidently concealed herself, and stood before me. Her appearance

was extraordinary. A large, grey woollen cloak, and coarse straw bonnet, concealed a figure of elegant proportions, and remains of considerable beauty were yet visible in a hollow, though flushed countenance: her dark eye kindled with an expression that told a tale of fearful vicissitudes.

“ ‘ Lady St. Elme,’ said she, with broken and hoarse accents, ‘ we fell by the same betrayer: the work of ruin which has plunged you into the career of shame, also precipitated me from the paths of virtue. — Augustus! — do you shrink from that name?—Augustus once loved me, and I loved him with all the purity and ardour of a virgin heart . . . Now I live for hatred and revenge!’ . . . The creature continued uttering words of terrific import, until, sinking on the earth, I implored her pity.

“ ‘ Poor Lady St. Elme!’ added she, with a fiendish smile, that gave an impression of horrible mockery: ‘ would you like to hear of your husband?’ — I shrieked with dismay. — ‘ Well, well, I shall not tell you, then:—he lives; he is

safe; but I will tell you that it was Augustus who ruined him. Glenmore was the viscount's chief creditor: Glenmore was the usurer, — I know it,—I knew it long since,—I knew all. I know that he hated Harcourt;—how he oppressed,—how he degraded first, and injured after;—how he envied his personal advantages, his persevering talents, the generous affection of Harcourt's father . . . I know . . . yes, I know that a will was made! . . . and suppressed!!'

“ ‘ Stay,’ interrupted I; “ what will do you mean?—whose will was suppressed?—strange, incomprehensible being! how came you here?—What fearful similitude of position unites us thus in one common interest?—What wild accumulation of facts burst upon me? Say, what of Harcourt?—tell me of him?’

“ ‘ Harcourt's father left a will!’ rejoined the woman. ‘ You know enough; farewell!’

“ She walked rapidly from me, and disappeared in a winding path, that led into the most unfrequented part of the demesne. Sach, Charles, was my unexpected meeting with this

extraordinary female, of whose features I have not the slightest recollection; nor can I in any way solve the mystery of her appearance. In justice I feel bound to inform you of these circumstances, which may ultimately lead to the discovery of your father's will. Respecting Glenmore's villany, I needed no other information: my own sad experience sufficed. As to Lord St. Elme, his fate seems involved in mystery. Would I had questioned my strange informer, who mentioned his health and safety.

"My plans . . . but no! it is not meet that I should tell you of my plans. Emily alone shall be my guide, and my confidant: from her you will hear of my existence, and the unchanged affection of your

"SISTER."

This letter from Anastasia filled me with sadness and wonder. Who, and what could be the unknown visitor that had thus burst upon her privacy, and alluded to events of such startling import? This unsought-for communication corroborated my former dark suspi-



cions as to the existence of a testamentary document of my late father. Therefore, without mentioning the circumstances either to Cleveland or Emily, I wrote directly to Mr. Ashton, recapitulating the chief evidence on which my former doubts had rested, and extracting the necessary paragraph from my sister's letter in support of it, asked both opinion and advice, which I knew would be given with equal alacrity and candour.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Such is the fate of guilt,—to make slaves tools,  
And then to make 'em masters by our secrets.

HAVARD, *Regulus*.

I MUST confess that this singular occurrence caused me considerable agitation. There had always existed sufficient grounds to admit doubt of my father's intestacy; and the unsought, unexpected communication of a stranger was, to say the least, extraordinary. It was with some anxiety that I awaited Mr. Ashton's answer, being determined to act solely under his guidance, and avoid giving alarm to the adverse party by a premature disclosure of the information I had received, or the use I intended to make of it. After the necessary

delay of a few posts, I obtained the following friendly advice, which I lay before the reader.

*Bedford Square, Sept. 183—.*

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ Your information merely confirms the idea I have entertained since our first meeting ; but you must proceed with great caution. The letter you quote states the fact of a will having been made and suppressed ; but does not prove its having been executed by the testator, or withheld by his heir. I regret that the woman whom you describe to have held this conversation with Lady St. Elme, cannot be secured, as her testimony might be of material consequence ; but I fear there will be difficulty in obtaining sufficient evidence to implicate the witnesses of the deed : for if the parties have acted with prudence and foresight in this dark transaction, they have taken every precaution against detection. You must endeavour to get Richardson, the attorney, on your side. If once he commits himself, your success will be

certain. He may perhaps be induced to speak, and thereby establish your claim to the late Earl of Glenmore's personal property. I scarcely think that his integrity could withstand a very strong temptation; but it is hard to pronounce judgment on others. I implore you to be extremely circumspect in your proceedings. Have self-command not to lose sight of the main point in view; and on no account commit yourself through rash and ill-concerted measures. You will make no delay in seeing Richardson, and write me the result of the interview. Believe me, my dear Sir, ever happy to hear of your welfare and prosperity, your obliged and faithful servant,

“JOHN ASHTON.”

On receipt of this welcome epistle, I set out forthwith for the village of B——d, where lawyer Richardson possessed a very elegant establishment, furnished in a style of luxury, which proved that the management of the Glenmore property had not been unproductive.

As I rode towards the place, I was surprised at the numerous and expensive improvements, and mounted the peristyle with a sensation of anger and disgust I could scarcely conceal from the servant who held my horse. The attorney was at home, and rose from the deep recess of a lounging chair as I entered his study. For a moment he did not seem quite prepared to identify me.

“ My name is Harcourt,—*Charles* Harcourt,” said I, looking calmly in his face. “ You may probably call to mind the circumstances under which we last met.”

“ Dear me ! Mr. Harcourt !! ” exclaimed he, with some slight trepidation.

“ I was sure Mr. Richardson could not have so easily forgotten the familiar face of an old friend,” said I, with a conciliatory manner.

“ To be sure, Mr. Harcourt, I recollect you perfectly,—not in the least altered ; rather improved, I should say,” replied he, with his most bland smile of self-approbation.

“ You seemed so astonished, that I feared

you might not immediately bring my features to mind," said I.

"I certainly was a *leet-el* surprised,—most agreeably so, I assure you. Very happy to renew the honour of your acquaintance," answered he, gradually recovering from any unpleasant impression my unexpected presence might have occasioned.

"The sentiment is mutual," cried I, with a mental reservation.

"Ha, ha!—returned from your Continental tour, I can easily perceive," interrupted he, smiling and shuffling. "You are looking remarkably well. Have you been long in this part of the country?—Oh! shooting at Mr. Cleveland's, I presume—charming place—delightful family, I am informed. Pray, take a seat... quite glad to see you... such a stranger amongst us.—Did you like foreign society? Is it thought probable we shall have war? Not without a change of ministry, I suppose?"...

He went on so rapidly, pursuing the thread

of his own ideas, that I had some difficulty in cutting my way through the midst of his discourse.

“ I came to talk over a little private business, that may prove advantageous to us both,” interrupted I.

“ Most anxious to meet your wishes, Mr. Harcourt. Command my professional services: they are quite at your disposal,” cried he, catching at the possibility of a job. “ Any thing to be done in the way of settlement, eh, eh! Tiresome things these legal delays. I promise, however, to be as expeditious as any man in England,” observed he, rubbing his hands with vulgar glee.

“ I might, indeed, require your assistance, Mr. Richardson; and am convinced that your zeal is only to be equalled by your acuteness,” continued I, wishing to keep him in play.

“ I am proud of your good opinion, and shall study to deserve it,” returned the lawyer, bowing obsequiously.

“ My dear sir, that opinion is hereditary, if

I may use the term. My father placed great confidence in your talents," added I, by way of opening.

"Thank you, thank you, Mr. Harcourt. He was, indeed, a kind friend to me: none could regret his lordship's premature death more sincerely than myself," observed Richardson, with considerable effrontery. I did not venture to look at him, for I blushed for human nature.

"I am not surprised," interrupted I, carelessly; "for he valued your society, and during the last year of his life derived great comfort from your friendly visits; he often mentioned your attentions, both private and professional, in his letters to me; some of which are still in my possession."

The attorney appeared rather uneasy, and looked keenly at me, as if to penetrate my thoughts. But I stood his glance without shrinking.

"Indeed, Mr. Harcourt, the late earl was very kind, and honoured me with great notice and frequent invitations," answered he, with Jesuitical meekness. "Charming man your



father,—such vivacity—such conversational powers!”

“He always gave excellent dinners,” said I; “that is a great bond of union between the visited and the visitor.”

“And capital wine,” pursued Richardson, following the pleasing suggestion.

“Your delightful society must have been a great acquisition to my father. I know he used to consult you on every subject, and paid great deference to your admirable decisions; which, in a great measure, induces me to request your assistance in my own case, being just now in a dilemma, from whence I think you may be able to extricate me with your accustomed ingenuity.”

Richardson’s countenance brightened as I spoke: he pulled off his spectacles, wiped them, looked full of importance, put them on again, and, drawing a deep aspiration, observed:

“You are too kind, far too partial, Mr. Harcourt,—just like all the Glenmore family.” He smiled ambiguously, and I bit my lip with

concentrated rage: had it not been for Mr. Ashton's excellent and prudent admonition, I could have fiercely turned on the mean crouching wretch before me, and told him plainly to his face my errand and my suspicions.

But the moment was not arrived for open warfare. I determined on parleying a little longer, being in hopes he might slightly commit himself. The least inadvertence would be sufficient to assist my present clue.

"It is a very strange thing that the will drawn up in my favour could not be found on the morning of the search," said I, calmly.

"Nothing could be more active than the search in which you personally joined, Mr. Harcourt," replied the man of parchment coolly: "no man can be accountable for the production of a testamentary document, unless it is formally entrusted to his custody, and I pledge you my honour as a gentleman,—as a friend,—his lordship never confided any paper of that nature to my care. I tell you this, independent of my professional character; for I should wish

to obtain your confidence, Mr. Harcourt, and will study to merit the favour you seem inclined to bestow on the faithful servant of your lamented father."

"I am perfectly aware of your having drawn up the draft or outline of a will, — a sort of minute of the late earl's intentions," said I, calmly.

"It is impossible for me to recollect all the business I had the honour of transacting for the respected deceased; but you know very well that one will cancels another, according to the date; and as no paper of the sort was discovered, we must presume that the testator destroyed any such document himself, which constitutes an intestacy."

"The assumption of my father's destroying the will does not do away the fact of your having made one for him;" interrupted I, bringing matters to a point.

"Very true; it would be a hard case, indeed," cried he, rubbing his hands, "if we lawyers were accountable for all the papers we may prepare."

“And you certainly prepared my father’s will: — it can be proved,” added I firmly.

“It was a sketch, — a mere memorandum,” stammered Richardson, thrown completely off his guard; — “worth nothing in law, I assure you.”

“That memorandum was executed and witnessed in your presence, by individuals yet alive. So the *mere* sketch became a valid document to all intents and purposes. The question now hinges on the production of this will.”

The attorney’s face assumed a saffron hue. It was material for me to ascertain if the will had actually been destroyed, or simply withheld. The former case would constitute felony, if proved; whilst the concealment of the document would answer all the ends of depriving me of my father’s bequest.

“Ye — es . . . . as you say; and, as I have sought to convince you, the whole business lies in a nutshell. It is the production of the will that alone establishes its legality; for people may execute fifty such deeds, and cancel them

after. If none are set up, the fact of such being made is nothing to the purpose."

"Certainly, certainly," said I, with affected carelessness; "yet you perceive, Richardson, that I am able to prove the execution of my father's will; and if the case required it, must subpoena you, to give evidence as to your handwriting." He looked confounded, but not incredulous.

"My dear Mr. Harcourt, of course you will act as you please; but I am morally certain you are fishing in troubled water. My respected friend, the present Augustus Earl of Glenmore, found no such document (to my knowledge); and is it not rather more probable that the deceased might have altered his intentions and annihilated the instrument himself?—most likely after you were expelled from Cambridge."

The shaft was well sped; but I rallied immediately, without flinching under the unworthy insinuation.

"I believe, sir," returned I, nothing daunted, "that my father made his testamentary dispo-

sitions subsequent to that event ; but, perhaps, if the present earl was informed that it is my intention to institute a very strict legal investigation as to the execution and non-production of the will in question, he might, probably, examine the papers in his possession more minutely ; and something which may be advantageous to all parties might be discovered amongst them."

" Stay, sir," interrupted Richardson: " what am I to understand ?"

" That I shall feel extremely grateful to you, and to Lord Glenmore, if you will oblige me by looking over all my father's deeds and legal instruments ; for I greatly fear the will has been mislaid or over-looked ; and by so doing, you will spare me the trouble of taking more decisive measures, for which I am fully prepared."

" Do you authorise me to open the subject to his lordship ?" inquired Richardson.

" I not only authorise you to do so, my dear sir, but I advise it strongly ; it will be better for all parties . . ."

“Certainly . . . there might possibly be . . . an error . . . a mis . . . take” — murmured he between his teeth. — “A careful search was made by me in your presence, Mr. Harcourt ; but to satisfy you, I will undertake to convey your wishes to Lord Glenmore. I promise to be as active as possible : but allow me a little time to communicate with his lordship, and you shall be punctually informed of the result.”

“Very well, Mr. Richardson: I leave the affair in your able hands, convinced that none can manage it more satisfactorily. This day fortnight I shall call again : in the meantime make the best of the business with Lord Glenmore. You will not find me wanting in gratitude,” added I, putting a fifty pound note into his hand. “That the will was executed I can *prove*; and you know best if it will suit your client’s interest to show that it has been destroyed.” So saying, I wished him good morning, and returned to Belmont Lodge, deeply preoccupied with the ultimate result of this strange event.

I despatched a minute account of the inter-

view to Mr. Ashton, who congratulated me on the success of my diplomacy ; for he felt convinced that rather than risk farther investigation and exposure, they would compromise the matter to my satisfaction.

Although the prospect of discovering the existence of a testamentary document which would decide my future independence, if not affluence, engrossed a considerable share of my thoughts and attention, yet Anastasia's extraordinary and pathetic letter had deeply affected my feelings, and I deemed it necessary, not only to answer her appeal, but to offer her protection and assistance in her present state of comparative need.

In the first place, I assured her of my unalterable regard, and my desire that she should, without hesitation, remove from Desmond Hall to some more suitable asylum. Being prepared for a certain reluctance on her part to accept any obligations from me, I endeavoured to reconcile her, by using the name of her unhappy mother, from whom I had received at least sufficient to screen her daughter from



the approaches of poverty, and the insults of the world.

I mentioned my anticipated nuptials with Emily Vyvian, and the sincere hopes I entertained that she would confide her future destiny to the intelligent and affectionate care of my intended wife, who was in every way calculated to ensure her temporal comforts, and the peaceful enjoyment of an after life, which I trusted would amply compensate for the vanities and errors to which the inexperience of youth had exposed her. I wrote tenderly—as I felt—as I believed she would feel.

We both agreed that an interview would not be desirable for either party, until she had withdrawn herself completely from all contact and communication with Lord Glenmore; and the sooner a separation from him could be effected, the better; for which reason I urged her not to remain in the power of her seducer, unless she meant to relinquish the good offices of a sincere friend and affectionate brother.

It was with a mixed sentiment of pain and

satisfaction that I heard the announcement of the earl's expected arrival at Desmond Hall. I knew his presence would in all likelihood decide the question of a will, and accelerate the movements of my hapless sister; yet the prospect of even casually meeting him,—of encountering once more his cruel and insulting enmity, was distressing beyond measure; and I dreaded the bitterness of my own feelings, when I contemplated the possibility of again coming in collision with the relentless foe, whose baleful influence had through life preponderated against my prospects, and blasted all former hopes of success. He was the evil genius of our race; and although I opposed the puerile weakness with all the philosophy of which I was master, the idea of his appearance seemed linked in my mind with the superstitious dread of impending ill, from which no effort of reason could entirely release me.

## CHAPTER IX.

A l'heure où le jour meure à l'horizon lointain  
 Qu'il m'est doux près d'un cœur qui bât pour mon destin,  
 D'égarer mes pas dans la plaine !  
 Qu'il m'est doux près de toi d'errer libre d'ennuis  
 Quand tu mêles pensive à la brise des nuits,  
 Le parfum de ta douce haleine.

VICTOR HUGO.

Aimer ! . . . c'est vive deux.

DE LA MARTINE.

Rien de plus timide, rien de plus effronté  
 Que l'amour d'une femme.

H. DE ROANY.

THE intervening time which necessarily elapsed between my visit to Mr. Richardson, and the period appointed for Lord Glenmore's definite answer to my application, hung heavily. Unwilling to disturb the serenity of Emily's mind by relating the singular circumstances which

had occurred, I avoided entering on the subject either with her or with Cleveland, as I deemed it both useless and injudicious, not wishing to raise a host of tumultuous conjectures, or sanguine expectations, which might, in the course of a few days, be crushed for ever.

Although I knew I could depend on their secrecy and circumspection, I also judged it more advisable to allow Augustus a fair opportunity of extricating himself with honour from the foul imputations now resting on his character, which, although apparently well founded, were of so serious a nature, that I was ready to receive reparation for the injury inflicted, without seeking the base gratification of revenge, or legal redress, unless compelled to do so.

I strongly suspected that Richardson would find it advisable to bring forward my father's will ; as, probably, the danger would fall more heavily upon him than upon his employer ; and I was tolerably convinced that he was too cunning a rogue to destroy such a document even if bribed to it, when the suppression of it

might answer the purposes of fraud. The circumstance of his holding the paper in his hands would be a continual check over Glenmore ; and if dexterously used, might prove an instrument of amazing power and magnitude, through the agency of which he could possibly achieve the objects of his ambition.

The more I reflected, the more I adhered to the suggestions of my own mind on the subject. It was not very likely that Richardson should first commit himself by undertaking an office of guilt, and not retain the means of implicating his accomplice and of clearing himself, should either investigation or discovery be apprehended. I knew that I held a clue which must lead either to the production of a will, or the proof of its destruction.

The position of my sister gave me considerable uneasiness. Delicacy forbade my interfering more openly than I had done ; but my soul revolted at the possibility of her lingering in the house of Augustus. I was most solicitous that she should withdraw from him without

delay; and the evident irresolution of her conduct filled me with anguish. I not only depended, but I acted on the conviction of Emily's warm regard and generosity of sentiment towards Anastasia, who had so many titles to my services, so many claims on my affection;—above all, she was the daughter of my mother, and, like that fondly remembered mother, she had strayed from the path of duty—like that mother she was lovely and open to temptation. Incensed with the intoxicating fumes of vanity from her earliest youth, she had gradually followed that easy and delusive ascent, that conducted her to the abyss of guilt and misery in which she was plunged.

It was true that a sense of error already aroused her to a perception of her own debasement; and Emily, inspired by the purest motives, had succeeded in raising her thoughts from the contemplation of the present and past, to the bright anticipations of futurity. Yet, until Lady St. Elme should be beyond the contamination of Augustus, her repentance

would lead to no satisfactory result. I sometimes endeavoured to persuade myself, that as Glenmore had treated his victim with such heartless neglect, and that he merely came backwards and forwards to Desmond Hall as suited either his humour or his purposes, that his sway over her could not be strong; the tenor of her own letter indicated neither love nor esteem for the betrayer of her happiness. Yet I could not conceal to myself that my sister was ostensibly living under his protection, attended, or perhaps guarded, by his servants, and supported . . . (oh God! what a degradation!) by his means!

The natural agitation and anxiety of mind attendant on these combined circumstances, could not fail to produce a visible effect on my spirits and outward demeanour. Although I was successful in obviating those interrogatories and inquiries, my increasing depression might possibly have elicited from less delicate companions, yet I could not screen my uneasiness from the penetration of Cleveland and my

affianced bride: who, if not permitted to share my confidence, but too evidently participated my feelings in a modified degree.

There existed also another object of curiosity and interest, to whom it was desirable I should direct my attention, and whose presence might prove of essential service to establish the execution of the will, although it was impossible for me to guess in what manner she ever could have acquired either knowledge of its existence, or of my father's intestacy. I was completely frustrated in every attempt to get tidings of the mysterious female who had accosted Lady St. Elme. She had scarcely been observed by any persons in the neighbourhood, and had disappeared immediately. Various and contradictory were my surmises as to who and what she might be, and how an obscure vagrant could possibly be in possession of facts which were likely to prove of such vital importance to my welfare. I sometimes entertained hopes that she would be induced to apply personally to myself, and make her communications in a



more explicit manner; but she was not to be seen in any of the usual haunts of vice or beggary,—at least, neither myself nor those I employed could discover any traces of her. I was, therefore, induced to connect her appearance with that of a gang of most daring smugglers who had infested our neighbouring sea-coast for some time. These desperate ruffians had kept the country in a constant state of alarm, having defied the united efforts of preventive service and magistrates. Cleveland, who was very active in the latter capacity, followed up their movements with unwearied vigilance. I often accompanied him on these nocturnal expeditions, much against the secret wishes of Emily, but in real compliance with the desires of poor Mrs. Cleveland, who felt more satisfied as to her husband's safety, knowing him to be accompanied by a friend.

On one of these occasions, we seized an immense cargo of contraband goods, which had been landed in a remote cove, not above five miles from Belmont Lodge, and the smugglers

came in such force to the rescue, that we fled in great confusion, one of our men being severely treated in the contest. Continued wild and exaggerated reports of the smugglers and their achievements were bandied about the vicinity, augmented by the terrors of the fearful, and corroborated by the daring spirit of these marauders, who became emboldened by success. So great was their audacity, that the little French corvette used to glide dexterously almost under the bows of our revenue cruisers, and land a cargo unobserved before a shot was exchanged. The ostensible freight was eggs or poultry; and with united ingenuity and courage, they contrived to baffle the skill and patriotic exertions of his British Majesty's loyal servants.

A state of considerable excitement prevailed through the adjacent villages, particularly those on the coast. The militia, or rather a volunteer corps, turned out on the occasion. People made themselves busy; the idle found occupation for their idleness, and the employed found enough to do in keeping the idle out of mischief.

Mrs. Cleveland got extremely nervous, turned pale with every gust of wind, and started at the unexpected closing of a door. Emily was calm, and attempted to appear heroic; but the rising tear which often dimmed the lustre of her eyes betrayed the female weakness within.

Cleveland was the active man on the occasion, presiding magistrate, and commander of the forces. He was eulogized for his signal services and personal intrepidity; he was made chairman of some county "peace preserving" or "legal investigation committee." We all had our little share of notoriety on the occasion, and *even I* was of some consequence.

The day appointed for my marriage was approaching, and that prospect of happiness, which but a few days previous had formed the very essence of my existence, ceased to exhilarate my spirits. I was distracted with contending thoughts, aspiring hopes, and the concomitant reaction which ever accompanies a state of over-excitement. A sense of sorrow, of sadness, of impending evil hovered over me, and embit-

tered every moment of present enjoyment. I felt that I was guilty of ingratitude to Providence for the blessings which already surrounded me, and unworthy of those apparently in store. Yet I could not chase the cloud that spread its darkness even on my brightest visions. My very position seemed forced and unnatural. I loved Miss Vyvian as ardently as ever; still even the prospect of being united to the pure object of my deliberate choice, the woman of all others created to diffuse peace and cheerfulness on the most unattractive spot, failed to relieve me from the painful anxiety of my own mind. The expediency of consulting Cleveland on the subject of my affairs sometimes suggested itself, but I resisted the impulse, and condemned the desire of imparting my confidence as a weakness to be overcome. I resolved to await Mr. Richardson's final reply, ere I communicated a single circumstance connected with Anastasia's letter to any individual except Ashton.

It grieved me to shun alike the manly but

conciliating voice and manner with which Edmund seemed to invite my candour, and the affectionate but less guarded inquiries of the tender Emily. Their presence, which I had been in the habit of seeking on all occasions, was now an additional restraint on the free indulgence of thought and conjecture.

I found a degree of solace in out-door amusements ; the sports of the field, to which I resorted, afforded some diversion from the torturing forebodings which oppressed me. Hour after hour I strolled alone, walking for miles on the wild rocky shore, watching the varied tactics of the different boats cruising about the coast, or lingering with lessening sail on the deceptive horizon.

The sea is a glorious sight. I never yet could behold its boundless immensity, its awful grandeur, or the smiling expanse of its deep bosom, without a sentiment of profound adoration, and experiencing that inward prostration, that worship of the soul, which the great works of an Omnipotent Creator are sure to command,

alike from the stern bosom of sceptical philosophy, or the meek piety of a humble christian, with whom to *see* is to believe.

Sometimes immersed in speculation, I sat viewing the trackless ocean, as it dashed a feathery foam in powerless fury against the steep cliffs, or expired in ebbing murmurs on the shining beach. Restless ! insatiable ! untiring, and beautiful, in the fearful sublimity of the tempest, or in the bright sunshine that sheds its glory on thy blue and sparkling billows, and lulls thy troubled waters to repose !—there is no reasoning so profound as the sullen roar of thy ceaseless tides, no conviction so strong as the relentless power of thy waves !

Not unfrequently did it occur that Emily's persevering kindness shared my rambles. She was not to be deceived ; and having once discovered, with true feminine *tact*, that I was uneasy, she left no means untried to soothe the sorrow she too plainly beheld ; but the cause of which, neither her affection nor acuteness could penetrate. With a sweet expression of mingled

tenderness and curiosity, she occasionally looked up in my face as if to crave companionship. There was an earnestness in her gaze, that seemed to search the secret recesses of my heart. Leaning fondly on my arm, she directed our walks to some favourite haunts, enlivening the way with all the witcheries of which she was mistress: speaking on those subjects she thought would amuse me; pointing out the objects calculated to excite my admiration; and although she refrained from questioning, I could not help acknowledging that her patience and forbearance deserved something beyond the cold and evasive answers which greeted her apposite remarks.

“Charles,” said she one day, after conducting me to a rustic seat, where we sometimes spent a portion of our leisure, “you are sad, ... our prospective union does not render you cheerful and happy like myself.”

“Dearest Emily,” replied I, “our approaching union renders me thoughtful, rather than merry. Much is before us, and the cup of bliss

may be snatched from our lips, ere we partake of its contents. I reproach myself with having fettered your destiny with my own lot. I am not superstitious, Emily ; yet at this moment I feel all the horrors of presentiment which cannot be analysed and scarcely accounted for."

" You wrong me, Charles ; you wrong my constancy," cried she with energy ; " if you be prosperous, I will share your prosperity ; if otherwise, it will be another link between us ; you will then look to me for solace, and as the world may frown, so my smiles will increase in value."

" True, my beloved," cried I ; " if any thing could increase in value that which is already beyond all price ; but a united destiny involves a serious responsibility. We are answerable before God and man for each other. The nearer I contemplate our nuptials, the more importance the solemn engagement assumes, in my opinion, dear Emily. We must not consider it the mere indulgence of preference and passion, but as the pledge of our mutual confidence in



each other. Marriage has no medium; it must be either the penultima of human felicity, or of human misery. Our hopes, fears, interests, pursuits, and affections, are bound in one tie, which, if loosened or broken, annihilates all chance of peace or virtue: besides, at best, my prospects are disadvantageous, and my position in life is irremediable."

"Oh, Charles! how little you know me," interrupted Emily; "your misfortunes have hitherto endeared you. I shall glory in sharing your fate, whatever it may be; but, dearest, may not the horizon of independence brighten! Your talents have already done much; they will, — they *must* naturally raise you to that level you deserve to occupy."

"My talents, love, as you are pleased to call them," returned I, "are the result of industry, quickened by the pressure of events. If unwearied application, an earnest desire to please, can ensure literary success, mine will not be undeserved."

"You have already succeeded," exclaimed

Emily; "and that is only a preliminary to more brilliant distinctions."

"I wrote," said I, "as a profession; but I certainly did endeavour to raise myself from the horde of hackneyed scribblers, who apparently compose per page, and are paid according to the number of quires filled with their lucubrations: yet, Emily, remember that authorship is precarious; even the criterion of public favour may vacillate. How often is that valuable popularity abused by some writer, who, having proved fortunate in a first production, feels by that entitled to palm trash upon the reading world, through means of his publisher, until the nauseous dose is repeated unto satiety. Emily, I would fain be conscientious; man's mental powers are limited; each may complete a few works at intervals, and deprecate criticism by careful, well-directed efforts to please and interest the understanding; but he that issues volume after volume from the reeking press must write not for gain but for greed; and consequently will use his materials threadbare, until the thin web

of his canvass appears through the specious and meretricious ornaments of style and mannerism. My days of authorship are not over; but I must pause in the career of letters, and not trespass on the indulgent attention of a discriminating public."

"I think, Charles," rejoined Emily, "that I deserve some credit as a listener, after such a discourse, second to nothing but Dr. ——'s sermons in seven parts. I really thought that I alone should have been sufficient to inspire at least a dozen volumes."

"Dearest Emily, I almost envy your vivacity," replied I; "but to be serious: has not my unfortunate position in the social scale often shocked your pride and prejudices, but too well grounded? Indeed, the most cutting circumstance of all was the apparent fact of my father's intestacy: it seemed from that, as if he did not deem me worthy of the affection hitherto manifested by him."

"Not worthy!" echoed Emily.

"I allude to my duel with Augustus at Cam-

bridge, and my subsequent expulsion from college," said I.

"I knew you were expelled from Cambridge," returned Emily, blushing deeply and looking confused; "and that Augustus wounded you in the arm. The cause was . . ." added she, with a playful smile, . . . "some country belle, of whom both were enamoured."

"Stay, Emily," said I, vehemently; "I swear that *I* was not in love with Mary Smith."

"So you say now," answered she, leaning her light weight more strongly on my arm; "but at that time it was different; you felt and thought otherwise."

"No, Emily, no; make no rash conjectures," returned I; "the unfortunate girl never excited any feeling beyond interest and compassion. I pitied the headlong infatuation of vanity which ultimately hurried her to destruction. She was an only child, — a blind man's daughter, — a lovely innocent creature *then*. I saw her since! What fearful strides she had

taken in the career of vice ! I saw her in Paris, Emily. She was living with Lord St. Elme !”

“ The viscount !—good heavens !” exclaimed Miss Vyvian, “ do you know that Anastasia tells me she had some tidings of him ?”

“ Can he appear in England ?” said I.

“ Not well,” rejoined Emily ; “ or rather not at all. He is supposed to have forged some bills of exchange. I am sorry to say that Glenmore would be the prosecutor. You know that he is considered to have benefited by the viscount’s ruin, and is in possession of the estate.”

“ I did hear something to that effect,” observed I ; “ but have you seen Anastasia ?—what of her ?”

“ I did not wait upon her, for she wrote, announcing that Lord Glenmore was hourly expected at Desmond Hall,” replied Miss Vyvian.

“ She mentioned her hopes of seeing him ?” interrupted I, with impatience.

“ Not exactly,” observed Emily ; “ for I firmly believe his arrival will only be the signal for

her departure. She intends leaving Devonshire in a few days, and will in future reside with a respectable aged female, in whose prudence I place implicit confidence. She lives in the adjoining county, at a sufficient distance from hence to screen Lady St. Elme from animadversion and annoyance. She will be secure from all molestation from Augustus, which I consider of the greatest importance."

"You have, then, already selected a permanent asylum for my lost sister," cried I, with mixed gratitude and astonishment.

"Every arrangement is completed to her satisfaction, and, I trust, to yours," said Emily.

"Kind, generous girl!" exclaimed I; "your conduct is beyond praise, or—reward."

"Yet I shall claim the latter," returned she, smiling with the reflection of self-approbation; "and must request your sanction to visit our poor recluse occasionally in her new retreat, which I have endeavoured to render as suitable to her rank and refined habits of life as circumstances will admit. May she find peace,

if not happiness ! May she find the balm of repentance, if not the consciousness of innocence !”

“Dearest, kindest love ! it is impossible to express what I feel,” cried I, pressing her hands in mine with heartfelt fervour. “You will be weary of my oft-repeated protestations ; the language of gratitude is familiar to you. My affections are long since in your custody ; my constancy has been tried, and it has triumphed over the combination of time and distance. I can say no more : my future existence must be a comment on the text of my devoted attachment. I cannot die for you like the Paladins of old ; but I may live for you !”

“We live for each other,” interrupted Emily, blushing deeply. “Now tell me if there is any hope of the viscount’s reformation ?” continued she.

“None,” answered I ; “unless a decided change takes place in his whole disposition. He might at one time have excited my pity. I confess that at present, disgust is paramount ;

all sense of shame, of right and wrong, seems irretrievably lost;—but let us turn from the wretched contemplation of St. Elme's vices to our own immediate interests. Oh, Emily! when I consider the store of felicity reserved for me, I almost doubt the possibility of its reality. I am tortured with misgivings for the future. My circumstances are so peculiar: your near connexion with Glenmore, my inveterate foe, seems to place an unfathomable gulf between us."

"My relationship with Augustus happens to be one of those unfortunate events over which we have no control. I regret it deeply; but it is irremediable," answered she, with a sigh.

"You lived in great retirement during your childhood," observed I; "and I naturally conclude you could not have met my father."

"Many, very many years ago," interrupted Emily, with a tear trembling on her eyelid, "I saw Lord Esdale. How well I recollect him!—so handsome; yet so melancholy: his hair was getting grey, and his tall figure was slightly



bent, not with years, but with care. He was kind and generous. The impression is still vivid: I was but a little child, too young to be of consequence."

"But you have not forgotten him?" interrupted I, with impatience.

"Oh, no; that would be impossible!" added she. "He came twice to see my father when you were at Eton: it was from him I first heard . . . ."

"Heard of me!" exclaimed I, impetuously. "Oh, Emily!—you never mentioned this before."

"I do not know, Charles, to what sentiment of delicacy or reserve I must attribute my reluctance to speak of myself, and of our connexions. I could not bring myself to revert to any circumstances calculated to recall painful recollections of your father."

"I think he sometimes mentioned the name of Vyvian," said I; "it was that of a valued friend,—a college associate. It appears almost like a dream to me; but still it is familiar."

“ My father was, however, older than Lord Esdale ; his profession, his opinions, and his pursuits, placed an effectual barrier to their intimacy ; although nothing could eradicate their mutual attachment. It was your father who first related the particulars of your adventure on the Thames, when at Eton ; and that Augustus owed his life to your intrepidity ; — not that his lordship detailed the facts to *me*. I was too young, even to understand the whole of the story, or to claim any other share of his attention beyond frequent kisses, welcome presents, and sundry indulgences ; but he was talking to my father with paternal pride, whilst I listened unheeded to the narrative, of which every word sank deep in my young heart : my infant imagination supplied the deficiency of what I could not comprehend.”

“ Dearest Emily ! and did you see Lord Esdale after that ? ” inquired I.

“ No, never since the death of grand-papa Glenmore ; but the impression was made — it was indelible ! ” returned she.

“Your memory is most flattering, my sweet friend,” cried I; “and I cannot convey the feelings your words have excited. A new light bursts upon me: you have been the good genius of destiny, hovering near.”

“And you, Charles, have from childhood been the hero of my romantic fancy. Your letters from school once fell accidentally into my hands, and one of your prize-essays was forwarded to my father: these were treasures which long continued in my possession. Lord Esdale was evidently anxious to impress our family with a favourable opinion of your merit; you were to have been introduced at Lindham Rectory; but the unexpected death of my lamented father put a period to all communication between us. I became the ward of Mr. Herbert, conjointly with Augustus Percival. Of course, I saw no more of Lord Esdale, as I still call him; for it was under that appellation that I knew him. The remembrance of his unwearied good nature, his manly bearing, and distinguished physiognomy long lingered in

my mind. You, Charles, although unknown, were never absent from my thoughts, and yet I heard nothing of you. In vain I sometimes endeavoured to trace your destiny. The rolling torrents of events had swept you up in their whelming progress. I lost sight of you completely. At Hastings it was impossible for me to identify you. The name of Harcourt misled me, not being aware of the change, or at least not recollecting it. Augustus first informed me of the fact, that the man whose attentions had proved so pleasing—whose society had charmed me, was the same being whose existence had been an object of interest to me for so many years. I cannot describe the tumultuous emotion with which I hailed the joyful discovery, and beheld the realization of every childish dream,—the beau ideal of girlhood assume the tangible form of . . . but the bright fabric of my hopes was speedily annihilated ! ” . . .

“ And since that, Emily,—since the blissful moment which again united us, to part no more, you preserved the same silence. Why conceal

from me that one heart in the wide world has felt for me, and beat with kindness towards an outcast?" cried I.

"What can I plead?" inquired she: "nothing but a foolish sense of female propriety,—a scruple that sealed my lips until now. Forgive me, Harcourt; the deception was unintentional, as it has proved harmless."

"Your unparalleled constancy, my beloved Emily, is sufficient to check every sentiment but those of pride and gratitude. This is a blessing to which I could never have presumed to aspire: to be loved so long, and so devotedly, without even suspecting the flattering interest bestowed by you!"

"Yes, Charles; from childhood your name and character have been endeared to me by circumstances; from the day I first heard of your magnanimity at Eton, a new passion, if I may call it so, took possession of my little heart."

"And was not Augustus Percival sometimes distinguished by a small place in your busy thoughts?" cried I smilingly.

"No; it is strange, but I could not endure his insolence and over-bearing manner. Then I always considered that he would have the title, and all your father's property . . . But let us talk of something more agreeable."

"Stay, my beloved, you have yet a task to fulfil. I think the tie of relationship between us yet remains to be explained," interrupted I, looking fondly at my new-found cousin; for such I conjectured Emily must be.

"You have not studied the peerage, I perceive," added she, archly.

"No," answered I, in hoarse accents: "the volume which could only remind me of my unfitness to figure in its titled catalogue,—the armorial bearings which to me displayed but the one maddening and opprobrious mark, 'THE BAR-SINISTER,' was not for my inspection! . . . Go on, Emily, and tell me the history of . . . ourselves."

"You are already acquainted with the fact of your father's eldest sister marrying Mr. Percival, against the consent of the Desmond

family, and that Augustus was their only child; but probably you are not aware of the marriage of the younger sister, Lady Jane Desmond, with the Reverend Mr. Vyvian, a bosom friend of Lord Esdale, and a fellow-student at the same university. A year after, my mother died in giving me birth. My father was a man of peculiar habits and views; he retired immediately to his rectory, from whence he never travelled beyond the neighbouring village; and, giving up all society, educated me himself, according to his own ideas of female decorum and propriety. From this mode of life I consequently learned but little of the world; and received only such impressions as he allowed to be conveyed, or those that were imparted through his own medium. Imbued with most of his opinions, all his principles, and perhaps a few of his prejudices, if such they might be termed, I understood nothing of temporal distinctions, or the vast difference which the chances of birth and the blessings of affluence establish between fellow-mortals. I estimated

men, first by their virtues, next by their talents, and above all, by the judicious direction of those abilities entrusted to them. Greatness was divested of all its glittering externals; I only saw it in the simplicity of its real grandeur, without the aid of worldly *prestige*, which the trammels and refinements of society are sure to cast around. But to return to Lord Esdale: his history was for a length of time a sealed book to me: it was only by slow degrees I was allowed to penetrate the mystery of your birth; and the obliquity of your situation was gradually divulged as my curiosity was raised, and my questions became more urgent. In fine, Esdale was the brother of my deceased parent: as such, I was taught to love him; his faults, his errors were never spoken of, though deeply deplored. It was on his return from a protracted residence on the continent, that I first saw him. My father's marriage, my birth, and my mother's death, had all occurred during that period. Full well I recollect that meeting. Both were agitated, both



struggled with emotion. I was brought forward by my maid, and, as Lord Esdale stroked my head, I felt a scalding tear on my neck, and his deep voice murmured, in a mingled tone of sorrow and affection, "She is very like her mother!"

"Dearest Emily!" interrupted I, we are then the offspring of a brother and sister,—cousins in blood. If the institutions of society disallow the connection, our hearts, at least, have not belied our consanguinity. One question more: Did Augustus ever seek to gain your affections?"

"It might appear vain of me to answer, were not his motives so sordid, that his preference was rather injurious than flattering," answered she, colouring to a crimson hue.

"Was jealousy, then, mixed up in his prohibition to my visits when at Hastings?" cried I with rising indignation.

"Jealousy, Charles, would imply love, of which I am far from accusing Augustus. He wished, however, that I should become his

wife ; but that is long since, and I had nearly forgotten it. He wanted to concentrate all the interests of the family in one."

"Do not the titles and the estates revert in the female line?" exclaimed I, with a lingering uncertainty. "Should Augustus die without issue, the next in succession must be . . . yourself."

"Would you love me less, Charles," cried Emily, casting her bright eyes on the ground with charming diffidence, "if I were ever to become the mistress of Desmond Hall?"

"Oh ! my beloved, this must not be : I cannot think of such a possibility, and then be selfish enough to blend your bright prospects with mine. Formed as you are, to grace a coronet, to shine forth in ermine, and prove a very gem in the galaxy of the peerage, you cannot unite your destinies with mine. I, the stigma of your race, — the blot, — the bar on the escutcheon ! — No ; the disparity between us is too great. Had you been a poor, portionless, nameless girl, to whom I could offer the

protection of a husband and the shelter of affection, I should almost rejoice in that adversity which would bring us on a level. I could conduct you to a home embellished by mutual attachment, and shield your friendless innocence. . . . But, Emily . . . the splendour of your prospects, like the lightning in the skies, has not only dazzled, but destroyed me . . . we must part . . . the heiress of Lord Glenmore . . . oh God ! . . . you cannot marry an illegitimate cousin ! . . . the world . . . its prejudices, its contumely . . . your friends . . . your acquaintance . . . prudence and reason, will oppose the preposterous alliance ! — Once more, beloved, you are free . . . to change, to choose . . . I ask nothing of your constancy but a place in that heart which once was to be mine without reserve !”

“Harcourt,” returned Miss Vyvian, “this is ungenerous, and even unjust. I do not deserve this from you. My prospects may be seductive to the votaries of fashion ; but my happiness is not connected with the ostenta-

tion of rank and fortune; my heart is unchangeable: can you reject it?"

"Never!" cried I; "but I cannot monopolize it."

"None else can ever possess it," exclaimed she, fervently.

"My own Emily," interrupted I, breathlessly . . .

"Augustus is not many years my senior," added she, smiling: "he is likely to marry, and in one moment upset the bright dreams of future distinctions. I assiduously endeavoured to conceal all these contingencies from you. A romantic and not unfounded idea forbade me to display prospects which might attract the multitude, but cause the delicacy of Harcourt to shrink from their glaring brilliancy. Remember that I am still the orphan daughter of Mr. Vyvian, your father's friend. I have no natural protector but Augustus. Mr. Herbert is far advanced in life. Observe, dear Charles, that I am making love to you, and that your respectful fit is both ill-judged and ill-timed . . . . Do

forget the possibility of my ever being a countess in my own right," . . . . added she, with kindling blushes, and quivering lips that were soon fondly pressed by mine.

## CHAPTER X.

Au cœur tout mon sang se retire,  
 A peine puis-je respirer ;  
 Sur mes lèvres ma voix expire —  
 Dieu ! qui viens-je de rencontrer.

ANONYME.

Light thickens, and the crow  
 Makes wing to the rooky wood :  
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,  
 While night's black agents to their prey do rouse.

SHAKESPEARE, *Macbeth*.

And art thou dead ? so is my enmity :  
 I war not with the dust.

YOUNG, *Zanga*.

A FEW days previous to the expiration of the fortnight I had allowed Richardson to prepare his answer, I set out on a shooting expedition, armed with a double-barrelled gun, and followed by Ranger. It was a clear sparkling autumnal day, which put forth that fresh, almost frosty appearance so conducive to exercise ; the leaves were yet in full vigour ; a richer hue alone

indicated the possibility of a speedy change. Blackberries encumbered the thick spreading brambles, and hazel-nuts were suspended in luxuriant clusters, tempting the school-boys from their daily task.

The birds were strong on the wing, and at first I fired a few unsuccessful shots; but getting into the spirit of the sport, I soon found myself far from Belmont Lodge, and verging on the confines of Lord Glenmore's woods. This was not a desirable spot for me to select, and had hitherto been forbidden ground. I discovered my vicinity with some pain, and hastened in a different direction, striking through a thick copse, belonging to Cleveland, which I knew would lead to the main road, from which I was at a considerable distance, having inadvertently swerved from the usual thoroughfare.

At this moment a female appeared picking her stealthy way through the thicket; the grey cloak and straw hat did not attract my notice; but there was something peculiar in the air of

the head, and precipitate step. I was accosted by . . . Mary Smith ! But time, or rather dissipation, had made fearful ravages in her once round and dimpled face ; her eyes possessed that unintellectual glare which but too often indicates habitual indulgence ; her once elegant figure still preserved a portion of its native grace : but all softness of contour was lost ; her frame had become bony, and her former blooming complexion had scorched under the fever of constant excitement.

With vehemence, rather than animation, she arrested my attention ; every gesture bespoke familiarity with male society ; and the hurried coarse accents with which she expressed herself, denoted indeed but too plainly that she had mingled with the bolder and more daring class of individuals.

“ Charles Harcourt ! I ought to recollect *you*,” said she ;—“ a few years have elapsed since first I saw you in D—— church ; and a few months only have passed away since we met in Paris. We have not forgotten each other.”



“ Unfortunate woman !” cried I, “ what has brought you to this ? — Where is Lord St. Elme ?”

“ What has brought *me* down to sin, misery, and remorse ?” replied she, with a bitter smile ; “ the same demon that tempted your sister, — the same demon that reduced you to beggary, — the Earl of Glenmore !”

“ Mary,” returned I ; “ you saw Lady St. Elme ; you spoke to her of me — of my father’s will.”

“ I did,” replied she ; “ and was on my road thither again.”

“ What can your errand be, Mary ? — The viscountess is a nervous woman. Your presence can neither be agreeable nor well-timed.”

“ But too well-timed,” murmured the wretched creature. — “ I only fear to be too late.”

“ Lord Glenmore is at the hall,” said I ; “ are you not afraid of subjecting yourself to farther contumely ?”

“ He spurned me once, — me and my infant.

I was houseless, homeless, friendless, fatherless! for I had killed mine with shame and sorrow. Augustus thrust me forth on the wide world. Harcourt!" resumed she, with the croak of a raven: "Augustus wronged you. Would not revenge be sweet?"

"Vengeance does not belong to man," I returned: "go and repent!"

"Repent! repent!" shrieked the woman, her features dilated with strong agitation; "first, revenge! Charles: your father left a will! . . . When I was lapped in luxury, and under the protection—(such protection, oh God!)—when I was the favoured mistress of Augustus, a letter fell into my hands: it was from Richardson, the attorney."

"I know that a will was executed," said I; "but the fact of Richardson having suppressed it yet remains to be proved."

"Listen to me: the sun is yet high in the horizon, and many hours of daylight are before us." As she spoke, a strange expression gleamed over her features. "Nothing demands

your immediate return, unless it be to whisper vows you will hereafter forswear."

"Mary, you presume too much," rejoined I ;  
"and your information, however valuable to me, shall not be mixed up with allusions to those whom I respect and love with equal fervour and sincerity."

"Charles Harcourt," answered my companion, whilst something like a tear bedewed her hollow cheek, "did you not once see me in happy, virtuous innocence ? But I fell into the snares of the tempter : I was flattered, caressed, and deceived. I left the humble roof that hitherto sheltered my youth and inexperience. I left . . . but stay, I cannot speak of him ! . . . a dying father's curse hangs heavy on a guilty child ! . . . For some time I was the triumphant mistress of Percival's affections. I revelled in luxury, and shared his pleasures, until they degenerated from sensuality to depravity. I was at the height of favour, when news came from Mr. Richardson, informing Augustus that your father was dying, and had made a will,

leaving you fifty thousand pounds. This intelligence was of a joyful nature, as he had long languished for the possession of the earldom and estates. But the loss of fifty thousand pounds, and personal property besides, had not been calculated. Moreover, school rivalry had laid the foundation of enmity in manhood. Augustus detested you ; he envied your worth ; he envied the noble disposition, the elevated soul, the brilliant talents, the well cultivated mind, that raised you above the misfortunes of your position ; he felt your natural superiority, and was jealous that, inheriting the peerage, he did not inherit your native greatness. Often do I remember the half muttered imprecations with which he accompanied your name. The friendship and introduction of the Clevelands was galling to his ulcerated heart !”

“ Time hastens on :—what of the will ? ” said I, interrupting the verbose exuberance of her communication.

“ Is time hastening ? To me it stands still,” retorted my companion, with a satanic smile.

“ You are impatient, and cannot give ear to my tale of woe ; you have not time to learn how a wretched woman is cast off by her seducer,—how her expostulations are silenced with oaths, her tears with ill-usage, and her heart’s devotion with scurrility,—how his door was closed on me and my child,—and how my last importunities have been answered by a warrant for my apprehension as a vagrant ! ”

She screamed the latter part of this sentence with such startling vehemence, that I stepped back from her immediate vicinity.

“ Ha, ha ! you are frightened ! I always thought you a man of courage,” said she, in a tone that brought with it a reminiscence of her former career, and thrilled me with disgust, as she laid her hand boldly on my shoulder.

“ You will particularly oblige me by being explicit,” answered I, coldly : “ your communication appears important to my interests and welfare ; yet, however anxious I may be to ascertain the positive existence of a will, I cannot consent to remain much longer lis-

tening to you in this equivocal spot and attitude."

"You deserve to be left in ignorance for your folly," cried the woman, flinging herself from me. "Do you think I have any thought beyond revenge? My child died!" added she, in a voice choaked with sobs:—"it died from neglect, poverty, misery!—it died, because its father cast me off!—it died, because I had not wherewithal to keep it alive!" She sat down on the grass, and wept aloud. Ranger fawned at her feet, and buried his large head in her lap.

"Oh, God! despised by man, a brute can feel for me!—Harcourt!" added she, mysteriously, "I am told that when I left my blind father in solitary darkness, a dog followed his cold remains." Mary was evidently in a state of excitement bordering on insanity. She took a small phial from her bosom, and swallowed a few drops, which restored her self-possession.

"This," added she, pressing the bottle, "is my comfort; this is strength, courage, and, above all, forgetfulness!"—She had taken a

mixture of laudanum and brandy.—“ You are impatient, Harcourt. Here is the letter : I kept it ever since, and should not now have betrayed it ; but, yesterday, (only yesterday !) on writing to inform Lord Glenmore, that if he refused pecuniary assistance I should tell all I knew, he issued a warrant to commit me to Bridewell.”

She handed me the letter, which ran thus:—

R— VILLA, *November, 182—*.

“ MY DEAR AND RESPECTED FRIEND :

“ I have much satisfaction in assuring you that all has succeeded according to our most sanguine expectations. On the receipt of yours of the — instant, I hurried to Desmond Hall: the earl was completely paralysed and speechless; his stupid old butler had dispatched an express for Harcourt, who is in London, so there was no time to lose ; I therefore took advantage of the first moment our village Esculapius left the room, to send the nurse after him, and rapidly snatched the key of the bureau

from under his lordship's pillow. He gave a deep groan, but I quickly opened the secret drawer, seized the precious document, and thrust it into my bosom. As I returned to replace the key, the dying man fixed his eyes on me with a frightful stare, and his jaw relaxed as he distinctly uttered the word "villain!" and sunk back exhausted. I need not remind you that it is not advisable to destroy the will, which is safe in my possession, as the charge of felony would involve serious consequences; and by keeping the testamentary paper, should Mr. Harcourt ever get scent of such a document having been executed, we can at any time escape prosecution by producing it after apparent search.

"The two witnesses, — clerks of my own, — are already on their way to America, and sailed from Liverpool last night, one of whom was rather difficult to deal with, having a sweetheart; so I was obliged to give him one thousand pounds, to enable her to accompany the lover; the other poor lad was glad to travel and



seek his fortune, and joyfully accepted five hundred pounds.

“For my own personal exertions, my dear friend, I claim no reward. Your valuable patronage, and inestimable regard, must ever render me your very humble servant,

“THOMAS RICHARDSON.

“P.S. The borough of —— will be vacant, as the present member has accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.”

On the leaf turned down was written : —  
“Start directly, and call on me in your way to take possession in due form. — Lord G. expired last night. — Harcourt is arrived.”

I closed the letter, but shuddered on observing a mark of blood on it ; it was wet, — a creeping horror came over me at the sight ; but it was soon explained. Mary had cut her finger with the brambles, and was busy binding it.

“Do you give me up this letter ?” I inquired.

“Yes, yes ! keep it ; use it if you will.”

I took my purse, and offered its contents.

She dashed it from her, saying, "No, no! money is useless now; 'tis too late."

"You stated poverty but a few minutes since," said I, proffering the gold.

"Aye, so I did," returned she; "but I cannot think of money now. Time passes: I have spoken; *others* will act!—Harcourt, there is one in the world more injured than you or I,—one, whose moral degradation and temporal ruin has been completed by Augustus!—Who led St. Elme to the gaming-table? Who led him to the dens of prostitution, where I met him? Who taught him to drink bottle after bottle until his bewildered intellects could no longer detect deception with cards and dice? Who battened on the remnant of his mortgaged property, and bought the estates at a heavy discount? Who seduced and destroyed the lovely viscountess, and now betrays her for the first wretch who crossed his path, and excites his depraved appetite?—Harcourt, if you could listen, what tales of heartless profligacy and calculating vice I could narrate! But see,

the sun is declining, much is yet to be done!" She looked thoughtfully around,—“ Nearly six,” —muttered the woman.—“ The tide will serve at midnight. — Your purse,” added she, “ its contents may yet be of use.”

I threw it into her open palm.

“ My blessing,” continued she, “ I will not give, lest ill luck should attend you : depart quickly, for the dews of night are falling.”

I turned gladly from the strange being who had held me so long in conversation, and after a short walk through the thick spreading plantation, I found myself in the high road, near the village inn. Somewhat fatigued with my day's sport, and parched with thirst, I entered the well-remembered sign of the Antelope ; and seating myself in the neat parlour, whose sanded floor was soon discomposed by Ranger's gambols, called for a glass of mine host's best home-brewed.

I was on a sort of a friendly footing with the landlord. We always talked together, and exchanged civilities ; prognosticated weather, con-

jectured politics, hinted changes in the ministry, and abused all foreign productions; although it was strongly suspected, and as often rumoured, that mine host had a snug corner in his cellar, solely appropriated to the occupation of sundry kegs of real cognac, which defied the scrutiny of gaugers, excise, customs, and preventive service. Moreover, some of the chief magistrates found the flavour of this same liquid so perfectly constitutional, that they naturally concluded the generous spirit was furnished by some legal source, and asked no puzzling questions.

On this occasion, my friend of the tap was deeply engaged in an adjoining apartment, discussing weather problems, and quaffing some of his own national patriotic beverage, with a set of equivocal-looking fellows, dressed in a sort of amphibious costume; as the smock-frocks and wagon-whips that completed their attire did not seem in strict accordance with the deep blue nether garments, which were decidedly nautical in their fashion and colour.

The door which, till now, had been what is commonly called ajar, was suddenly closed by an unseen hand from behind, as soon as my request for refreshment proclaimed the arrival of a stranger.

The appearance of these ruffians corroborated sundry suspicions I had previously entertained with respect to the frequenters of the inn. However, there could be nothing to fear from them at present. It was not yet dusk; besides I was not likely to interfere or molest their proceedings; so I continued quietly to discuss my home-brewed, and share my sandwich with my four-footed companion.

I was interrupted by the entrance of a stranger who stood for a moment as if dubious of remaining or quitting the room. A large pair of green spectacles effectually concealed the expression of his eyes, and the dark shade of thick moustachios obliterated the natural curve of his upper lip. A profusion of matted hair surmounted by a large oilskin hat, completed the disguise, whilst a huge sailor's fearnought defied the

identity of form. He glanced towards me; Ranger barked; and the intruder joined the circle in the next chamber.

The clock struck seven; I had at least six miles to walk ere I could reach Belmont Lodge; so I proceeded to the bar, paid my reckoning to the cherry-cheeked daughter of the house, and continued my walk homewards at a quick pace, for night was approaching fast. The moon had risen; white fleecy clouds were driven rapidly through the heavens by a sharp and cutting wind. There was something lone and sad in the very look of surrounding objects; my spirits sank below melancholy; the morning's conversation had harrowed my feelings, and the distant sight of Desmond Hall, now far in the rear, had awakened bitter recollections; whilst the disjointed phrases and confused language of Mary Smith, filled me with horror. The misery of others seemed to cast its gloom around me: I hung my head on my bosom, and endeavoured to direct my thoughts in another channel, dwelling on the

prospect now before me, of offering Emily an independence of my own. The proof of my father's having left a will was in my hands; and I felt assured Richardson would produce it.

Although I sought to beguile the way with the imagination of future happiness, I could not lighten the weight that oppressed me; a heavy cloud seemed to obscure my destiny, and darken my prospects. I felt as if I could have given worlds to have confided the whole affair to Cleveland. Secresy was strange to my nature, and I resolved to lose no time in craving his kind friendship and advice, and to commence by showing Richardson's letter.

Ranger, who followed sullenly at my heels, appeared to share my depression, uttering ever and anon a low, discontented growl, as if uneasy. I fancied sounds issued from behind the high fence. A gust of wind swept through the branches, and scattered a few seared leaves upon the ground. Remembering the company I had left at the Antelope, I felt something almost amounting to a sense of alarm, on dis-

covering that I had forgotten my gun in the parlour of the inn. It was too late to return for it, as I had now nearly reached the cross roads, one of which led to Belmont Lodge, the other to Mr. Richardson's modern villa. At that instant I distinctly caught the sound of a horse at full speed. In a few moments a gentleman appeared mounted; he slackened his pace as he approached. The moon emerged in full splendour from behind a cloud, and displayed the form of Lord Glenmore. A shot whizzed past, and he fell at my feet!



## CHAPTER XI.

What form is that ?  
 Why have they laid him there ?  
 The cold, blue wound whence blood has ceased to flow,  
 The stormy clenching of the bare teeth  
 The gory socket that the balls have burst.

MATURIN, *Bertram*.

Hear him thou, and hope not if by word or deed,  
 Yea, by invisible thought, unuttered wish,  
 Thou hast been ministrant to this horrid act,  
 With full collected force of malediction  
 I do pronounce unto my soul despair.

MATURIN, *Bertram*.

*Amicus certus in re incerta cernitur.*

ENNIUS.

I was alone with the corpse of my most inveterate foe ! The murderer had fled unseen by me, favoured by the protection of the hedge. On approaching the body and raising it, I perceived that it was totally deprived of life. A stream of blood gushed from the wound, and

mingled in the dust. I dragged it from the middle of the road, where it had fallen, and placed it carefully on the bank. The spirited horse Lord Glenmore had ridden galloped furiously in the direction of Desmond Hall, followed by Ranger, whose loud and protracted bark continued long after both had disappeared in a sudden angle of the road.

Stunned with the hideous catastrophe, I turned towards the Antelope for assistance, and hurried forward in hopes of obtaining relief; recollecting that a bye-path choked with briars led across the fields in a straight line to the inn stable-yard, I thought, by pursuing it, unfrequented as it was, I should save time and distance, and accordingly leaped over a dilapidated stile close at hand, and rushed on, heedless of every obstacle, scrambling amongst spreading brambles, long damp grass, and stinging-nettles. I had not proceeded thus many hundred yards, ere my foot slipped against a stone, and I fell with considerable violence amongst some bushes, from whence I was soon

extricated or rather dragged forcibly, by the strong arm of Lord Glenmore's groom, who commanded me to follow him in no very gentle terms.

There was a vulgar fierceness in his manner, that startled me : he held the handle of a loaded whip within three inches of my head ; his attitude was menacing and authoritative, whilst he led me back in unresisting silence to the highway, where a waggoner had stopped with his team, and a few labourers already collected, helped to place the murdered man on a litter, on which he was slowly conveyed to the Inn.

Thither I followed, escorted by the groom, who did not seem inclined to relax his gripe, or diminish his vigilance, from which, however, I exhibited no anxiety to escape. We had not gone far, before I discovered that my ankle was sprained in my fall ; the torturing pain, unperceived and unfelt during the intense horror of the moment, now increased at every step. I could scarcely stand from acute anguish, which gave an appearance of reluctance to my move-

.

ments; nevertheless, the man pulled me on with unmerciful vigour, and delivered me at length in charge to a constable, who put me in safe custody for the night.

Such a night!!—I was left in utter darkness. The sense of hearing, however, informed me that the corpse of Augustus was laid out in the adjoining room. A thin partition divided us. The pale, struggling light which was placed, according to custom near the body, gleamed under the wainscot and formed a streak along the floor of my temporary prison. I listened to the trampling of feet and the busy murmurs of tongues, as eager hands and eyes crowded to touch or view the murdered earl.

Gradually the tumult subsided; the hum of voices died away, the doors closed in rapid succession, and the receding steps of some lingering visitant proclaimed that the chamber was only tenanted by the dead.

Fearful thoughts assailed me: the image of the bleeding Augustus seemed stretched before me, rigid, stiffened in the last agonies of strug-

gling vitality. The features, pale livid, distorted in their agony, glared at me through the surrounding darkness. I laid myself on the floor ; I approached the partition, seeking the faint ray of light which issued from the neighbouring apartment: even *that* was better than perfect obscurity ; but the cheering radiance was intercepted by some dark object. I put forth my hand . . . the ground was wet . . . the purple stream had worked its way under the skirting . . . blood was oozing from the recent wound . . . I remember no more, for it was day-light when I recovered to a sense of existence, and some people were with me, who had provided breakfast and refreshment, and told me that a coroner's inquest would sit on the body.

I roused myself to a sense of duty and dignity, preparing to meet events with the courage of innocence, and the humble reliance of a christian. My oppressor, my persecutor had fallen, yet his evil influence extended beyond the grave. My destiny seemed involved in his. He was gone ! — He had already penetrated the

mysteries of another world. He had been summoned before that awful tribunal from the justice of which there is no appeal. The scene was closed !!

With considerable emotion I heard Cleveland's voice earnestly requesting permission to see me; but it was denied in a peremptory manner. I was compelled to await the result of the inquest.

The groom was the principal evidence. He proved having been accidentally detained some distance behind his master, who was returning from Mr. Richardson's villa. On approaching the cross-roads he had distinctly heard the report of a gun, which induced him to ride faster; but his horse got restive, and some minutes elapsed before he reached the spot. He then beheld a man move swiftly from the side of the hedge, until he reached a stile leading into the coppice. On dismounting to examine the body, which he thought had evidently been dragged from the centre of the road, witness saw that his master was quite dead,

and hastened in pursuit of the person who had rushed through a very narrow and unfrequented path in the thicket, where he discovered Mr. Charles Harcourt in the midst of bushes and brambles.

My double-barrelled "Manton" was found in the morning concealed in a large ditch : one barrel only had been discharged. The wadding and shot extracted from the wound corresponded exactly with the contents of the gun, which happened to be charged with some waste paper, on which I had written a few trifling memoranda. The foot-prints on the road tallied with the size of my boots. A letter was found in my pocket which appeared to have been abstracted from the body. It was stained with blood, and its contents evidently involved my personal interests. Several witnesses were examined. The groom having lived many years with Lord Glenmore, swore to the fact of my being the enemy and illegitimate cousin of his master. My precipitate retreat through the narrow path-way, which had another issue

towards the smuggler's cave, was attributed to fear of detection. A verdict of wilful murder against Charles Harcourt was returned by the jury.

I was committed to the county jail, arraigned as a murderer, consigned to the gloomy solitude of a felon's cell, —snatched from the friendship of those I loved,—debarred from all intercourse with my fellow-creatures, and plunged into the very depths of despair!

This awful conclusion to a tragedy at once as terrific as it was unexpected, nearly overwhelmed me. I sank under the atrocious charge preferred against me, and had it not been from a religious dependence on the divine mercy of that Being who had hitherto upheld me through so many troubles, I should doubtlessly have yielded to the wretchedness of my situation.

Alone, in the grated apartment which was henceforth to be my home, I listened to the distant sounds that echoed through the long arched passages leading to the different wards



of the prison. I heard the heavy creaking bolts and hinges, the clank of keys, and the closing of doors which rang the knell of freedom, and bade resignation assume the place of hope. I threw myself in speechless anguish on the straw pallet which constituted the sole furniture of my wretched abode. The intensity of feeling completely absorbed the powers of reason in the unquelled tumult of agitation, which had succeeded the first stupor of amazement.

There is a selfishness in grief, especially when produced by the injustice of mankind. We feel in proportion as the sympathy of others is withdrawn from us; and that which is denied by the world, we bestow more liberally on ourselves. Thus, the very circumstances which deprived me of the commiseration of my friends, rendered my wretchedness less bearable. I felt that if I could have free communication with Cleveland, and impress him with a strong conviction of my innocence, I should suffer less; but the idea of his believing the evidence

before the coroner,—of his harbouring even a doubt,—was appalling. I harrowed my mind with fruitless conjectures; a thousand times I endeavoured to penetrate futurity,—to follow the probable march of events,—to anticipate the arguments that might be used for and against me; and the result was always the same unsatisfactory chaos which added the torture of uncertainty to present agony.

I deeply regretted the previous reserve I had displayed towards my friend: it was likely to convey an unfavourable opinion. My want of confidence in regard to one so dear, so tried, so valued, would naturally bring with it a tacit acknowledgment of unworthiness of purpose and design. I trembled at the implication which might be deduced from my silence, and felt that it would tend to support the circumstantial evidence of the host of witnesses who would bear testimony against me.

My own simple assertion was all I could urge; whereas an unbroken chain of well attested facts were opposed to the eloquence of

innocence, and the pleadings of truth ; and I knew there was but one being in the whole world (excepting him who did the deed of blood) whose attestation might perhaps exonerate me from the imputation of murder ! — It was Mary Smith ! — I was persuaded that she was in some way privy to the crime perpetrated, and for which I was in danger of suffering an ignominious sentence. I sought to trace the connexion of circumstances which so strangely involved me in this mysterious catastrophe ; and convinced myself that the appearance of the stranger at the Antelope, the incoherent imprecations of Smith, the death of Glenmore, the loss of my gun, and its subsequent discovery in a wet ditch near the spot of the murder, were all sections of the same hideous drama.

The recollection of Emily at this juncture was agonizing. It could only be compared with the feelings endured by a man consigned to utter blindness ; who remembers the smiling aspect of nature, the genial light of day, and the beloved features of his family, knowing

that he is doomed to behold them no more. Even now, whilst I write, and the howling storm of adversity has passed away, I find it impossible to describe the intense misery I suffered during a period which can only be thought of with awe and sorrow.

At the expiration of some hours of bitter reflection and serious communion with my own heart, I recovered sufficiently to see the absolute necessity of fortitude and of self-possession, and addressed many fervent prayers to Heaven for succour under the heavy trial allotted me : nor did the petition of my utmost need remain unheard ; for, towards the evening of the second day's imprisonment, I was visited by Cleveland.

I cannot recall the tumultuous feelings that attended our meeting, without experiencing a similar emotion in a lesser degree. For some moments we were locked in each other's embrace. Words could not convey the deep sentiment of gratitude on my part, or the generous disinterested friendship on his. I fell on his

bosom exhausted from agitation, and he gently conducted me to the grated aperture from whence I received a small portion of light and air, which contributed to restore me, as I revived to a perception of his presence.

Edmund fixed a mild, but scrutinizing glance, which seemed to search the inmost recesses of my soul, and pressing me again to his heart exclaimed with energy, "Thank God! we meet at last! . . . Oh, Charles! and under such appalling circumstances!"

"This is kind, Cleveland!" cried I: "it is more than kind,—it is magnanimous."

"I tried in vain to see you during the inquest," interrupted he. "We wished to give bail; but, alas! none could be accepted."

"Nor should I have wished it. Will the trial be long postponed?" inquired I.

"No; it will take place immediately," said Edmund; "but perhaps, Charles, delay might be desirable for you to bring forward evidence as to character."

"No!" exclaimed I, "but the sooner the foul

stain now resting on it can be removed, the better : if not, life is valueless to me."

"Innocence must triumph," interrupted he ;  
"I need no farther conviction. I hail the glorious assurance. Your friends have suffered much, but I trust our anxiety will soon terminate."

"Tell me," returned I, "does Emily know . . . does she . . . believe . . . does she condemn me?"

"Be calm," observed Cleveland. "Think you that the friendship, the confidence, the love of many years, can be shaken by the rude blast of adversity? Do we not know you, Charles? and our experience must arm us against the deception of false appearances. Both Emily and Mrs. Cleveland have been ill, and occasioned me considerable alarm for a short time. They are better now, and are sanguine in their expectations."

"Of what?" inquired I with a sense of wretchedness.

"Of your acquittal," replied he.

“Do you say Emily has suffered on my account?” said I, checking the rising tears which forced their way from my burning eyelids.

“She is fast recovering. The firm conviction of your ultimate release has hitherto supported her; and my wife, who is indefatigable in her strenuous attentions, loses no opportunity of administering consolation.”

“How can I express my gratitude and affection?” answered I, relieved by the information he had so judiciously conveyed. “Had my prudence equalled my friendship, dear Edmund, my situation would not be so hopeless; but it is useless to repine: my ill-advised concealment of facts has been barbarously punished.”

“You allude to the recent discovery of the existence of your father’s will,” answered Cleveland. “I forgive you the want of candour, which both have so much cause to lament. I wrote to Mr. Ashton immediately as the occurrence took place. His answer explained your previous silence and pre-occupation; but we must now enter upon a business of more serious

nature. The trial comes on in the course of this week. Two eminent counsel are retained for the defence, and Mr. Ashton will be your solicitor; he is now on the road from London, and will be here to-morrow. I have endeavoured to seek witnesses, but without success. In my magisterial capacity I have exerted my prerogative to the utmost, and issued summonses and search warrants with orders for the instant apprehension of all suspicious persons that possibly could come within my jurisdiction."

I felt obliged to Cleveland for his zeal and activity, but was incapable of entering upon my own affairs until my anxiety concerning Emily was in a great measure dispelled by my friend's repeated assurances of her returning health and unalterable constancy. It was then requisite I should proceed to a clear statement of facts in the order they occurred, commencing with a recapitulation of Lady St. Elme's letter, my interview with Mr. Richardson, and the singular rencounter with Mary Smith on the day of the murder: I detailed the particulars of my



resting and procuring refreshment at the Antelope, with the recollection of having deposited my gun, which was loaded, in a corner of the room. I did not omit to mention the extraordinary assemblage collected in the second chamber, the closing of the door at the sound of my voice, and the entrance, or rather intrusion of the man in green spectacles.

Cleveland's excellent understanding seized the leading features of the case directly, and established a link connecting the appearance of Mary Smith with that of the stranger.

"Could you identify any of these persons you saw at the Inn?" asked he.

"I fear not," replied I: "some of the number had their backs towards the room I occupied, and all were busily engaged."

"Perhaps you might recognise the individual with moustachios?" observed he.

"His garb certainly could not be mistaken," said I; "but his face was cautiously screened from view."

"Do you believe Mary Smith had a previous

knowledge of the business?" inquired Edmund; "for I am strongly impressed with the notion of her being implicated."

"Certainly, I have thought so," answered I; "but the creature has probably fled the country. She spoke about the tide; but she appeared so dreadfully incoherent during that eventful conversation, that I doubted her being sane."

"We must exert ourselves," retorted my companion: "the strong arm of truth shall uphold you. No time is to be lost. We must discover the strangers who were drinking at the Antelope, and Mary Smith also; Mr. Ashton will soon be here, and assist us with his acuteness. In the mean time, prepare your defence."

"I shall make no defence," replied I; "nothing can be urged. I have nothing to prove. Innocence is my only plea, I have neither witnesses to produce, nor alibi to show,—nothing but the discovery of the actual criminal can save me from an accusation, horrible alike to God and man. — Cleveland, were it not for

that glorious power who sheds light on the surrounding gloom, I should sink under the pressure of my own feelings in this awful hour ! There are moments when I marvel at my own existence, — degraded as a criminal, branded as a murderer, dragged to a dungeon, fettered like a felon ! — I know nothing but the omnipotence of an especial providence can save me from absolute despondency. Cleveland, I could die unrepiningly, if my life were required ; but to leave a blasted name, — to think that those who once loved will only sigh in pity, or in *doubt*, — that none will proclaim me guiltless is more than I can brook, — Emily ! Emily ! would I had never blighted your destiny with my baneful influence !”

“Charles,” cried Edmund, “there is yet much in store for you, — days of happiness and peace. You will look back at these moments of anguish, and fancy them the wild creations of a feverish dream. Your innocence will fully appear. If human ingenuity, human eloquence can save you, it shall be exerted ; and if earnest,

humble prayer and supplication can reach the throne of divine mercy, many and fervent will be the aspirations of our anxious hearts. Harcourt, you will be saved, — I do not mean in the worthless sense of pardon, or reprieve, which implies previous guilt; but you will be nobly, honourably, cleared and acquitted. Emily is most sanguine. She loves you, Charles, as few men are loved, or even deserve to be loved. She loves you with all the affection and energy of her elevated nature. Your honour, your glory, are dear to her; and the conviction of your innocence, with which she is impressed, can only be equalled by the strength of her regard.”

“ Noble, generous girl !” exclaimed I ; “ speak not of her love and her devotion, I must not, cannot think of it. What misery I have entailed on all those that are dear to me ! I cannot see her, Edmund ; you must prevent her from approaching this den of wretchedness. Let her not participate in my impending ruin. She is rich and independent, — a countess in her own right. I know it all, and charge you to take her

from this appalling scene. Send her with your own excellent wife to some distant spot, where she will escape the frightful details of my trial. If she loves me, as I believe her ardent soul is capable of loving, she must be spared every unnecessary pang. She has already endured enough ; her gentle nature will not bear up against this accumulation of woe. She will shrink from the terrific recital of the stubborn facts, the strange amalgamation of which must tend to prove *that* which I am unable to refute, unless some unlooked-for discovery is providentially vouchsafed towards me. No ; she must not listen to the daily accounts of the prisoner's conduct, — the minutiae of evidence, — the summing up, — the charge, — the deliberation of the jury, — the verdict!! — Oh God ! it will kill her. Send her hence, Edmund ; send her to . . . London, to . . . Paris . . . to . . . the antipodes!! Be my fate what it may, she must not participate in the horrors of suspense. Speak to her, — speak reason ; enforce your arguments with tender persuasion.

Tell her I sent you with my last, my dying injunctions. She cannot disregard them."

"My dearest Charles," returned Edmund, taking my hand with kindness; "it has been the anxious wish of my wife to shield Emily from the torturing uncertainty of a trial, which must produce intense excitement amongst even the indifferent portion of society; and I tremble for the consequences with such an ardent mind as hers; but the Countess of Glenmore is no ordinary person: she does not flinch under the impending blow awaiting us all. Hitherto she has been deaf to our entreaties: no solicitation of ours can prevail on her to quit the neighbourhood: the excessive weakness, — utter prostration of bodily strength alone prevented her accompanying me hither this day."

"Charles, you must prepare to see her soon; my wife has promised to accompany her friend."

"Cleveland," said I firmly, "you must prevent this; and use your authority as a husband and a friend. Were I so selfish as to prefer

the soothing presence of that beloved woman, to the satisfaction of consigning her to the friendship of Mrs. Cleveland, I perhaps might lull my agony with the prospect of seeing her again before the approaching climax ; but, Edmund, I cannot, — I will not harrow her young heart, and wither her budding hopes. Our destinies henceforward must be different. She has youth, and the path before her is brilliant, with the advantages of rank, riches, talent, and her own excellences. The time may come, when her love for me will perhaps be subdued into a calm sentiment of kind regret. She may yet shine in the bright refulgence of prosperity and happiness. Many more fortunate than myself will love her truly and ardently, — not so well as I do, for that would be impossible ; but others might have more favourable opportunities of showing it. They might be possessed of fortune and connection, and may have advantages of position I never enjoyed. I love her too well to allow one selfish wish or desire

to intercept my ardent vows for her future welfare. I relinquish her for ever, Cleveland; I give her back to a world that claims her. Should the justice of my country and the intervention of truth, guided by heavenly mercy, free me from these unworthy chains, I shall fondly, gratefully remember the affection and the devotion that illumined the gloom of my captivity. Emily is the polar star, the brightness of which shall cheer me through the distance of time and space; but I cannot quench its beams in the shade of despondency."

"I shall, dear Harcourt, follow your instructions, and use my best influence over Emily in seeking to promote her comfort and peace of mind; but I question if your directions will meet her acquiescence. I do not presume to argue the point with either. I can only say, that in life or in death you can command my friendship, my energies, my time, my purse, my affection, and my slender abilities. If Mrs. Cleveland or myself can urge Lady Glenmore to any measures apparently conducive to her



health and peace, you may rely on our united efforts."

With these, and many other kind assurances, Edmund quitted me. . . . But I was inexpressibly relieved by his visit, which had cheered the solitude of my imprisonment. His pure and disinterested attachment was a blessing during the critical period which I had scarcely hoped for. I knew that with such a friend and such an adviser, Emily would at least be shielded and protected from the rude attacks of worldly misfortune. In relinquishing the object of my fondest devotion to the kind guardianship of the Clevelands, I felt that I was consigning her to the consolations of friendship.

There were, indeed, intervals when passion conquered the stronger principles of reason,—when I pined for the presence of Emily, and repented the generous forbearance which had inclined me to refuse the sad satisfaction of seeing her under existing circumstances. I was tempted to recall my words, to ask her

forgiveness, and exchange once more the fond aspirations of our mutual love ; but these were selfish yearnings unworthy of us both. I chased, I crushed the lingering hopes still clinging round my heart, like the green ivy, which only mantles round the ruin it vainly seeks to conceal under its unfading, ever springing verdure. I dispelled the mocking delusions of fancy, and endeavoured to steel myself against the enervating and wild desires that assailed me ; being convinced that an interview with my betrothed would rather tend to rivet our affections more lastingly, and excite emotions already sufficiently strong to threaten the peace of mind, obscure the destiny, and perhaps embitter the future existence of the young, rich, and elegant Countess of Glenmore.

## CHAPTER XII.

Injuste ou legitime,  
 Le plus léger soupçon tient toujours lieu de crime,  
 Et c'est être proscrit que d'être soupçonné.

CREBILLON.

Savez vous ce que c'est que l'amour ?  
 Qu'un amour qui devient notre sang — notre jour,  
 Qui long-tems étouffé, s'allume, et dont la flamme  
 S'accroît incessamment en purifiant l'ame.  
 Qui, seul au fond du cœur ou nous les entassions,  
 Brûle les vains debris des autres passions ?  
 Qu'un amour à la fois sans espoir et sans borne,  
 Et qui, même au desespoir, survit profond et morne.

VICTOR HUGO, *Marion de l'Orme*.

The good are better made by ill,  
 As odours crushed are sweeter still.

S. ROGERS, *Jaqueline*.

MR. ASHTON arrived, as expected, without delay; and Edmund, who remained in Exeter, was indefatigable in his exertions. He sought discrepancies of evidence, additional witnesses, and endeavoured to impress me with the necessity of preparing a proper defence. My excel-

lent friend Ashton was not less active, but far from being equally sanguine as to the result. Morally convinced of my innocence, he thought it his duty to warn me of the serious inference drawn from the evidence against me ; its chain was unbroken ; his chief hopes rested with the landlord of the inn, whom he thought likely to criminate the men drinking at the Antelope, on the fatal evening. With respect to Mary Smith, a reward for her apprehension was offered by Cleveland, and placarded through the country. One thousand pounds were added to the original sum, granted by the secretary of state.

The time which elapsed previous to the trial was passed in anxious and patient investigation. At length it commenced, and as there were but few cases of consequence, mine came forward the first day.

On the preceding afternoon we separated early ; I was desirous to fortify myself for the impending crisis by prayer and meditation ; whilst Cleveland and Mr. Ashton repaired with an additional brief to the counsel.

A cold wretched sensation took possession of my breast, as the receding steps of my friends died away along the corridor that led from the remote cell in which I was confined. We were to meet on the following day . . . . Edmund in the witness box . . . . and I . . . . in the dock !!

Evening approached ; the lurid rays of the setting sun peered through the complex grating of my window, the shadow of which fell with increasing magnitude on the damp and straw-encumbered floor. Another day was over ! How much was implied by those words ! Time had ceased for me,—an eternity was comprised in the short hours between the present moment and the portentous morrow ; my whole existence was centred in one brief period of agony.

As I pondered on the fearful circumstances which involved my safety, events of former years unfolded themselves gradually to my memory. The cruel persecution of destiny had reached a climax that it was impossible to shun. I was now stigmatized as a murderer, —the murderer of Glenmore!!—the murderer

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of that tyrannical oppressor, who had insulted and then robbed me,—the man, of all others, whose decease was an actual benefit, and whose existence had produced a continued series of injuries to me. His death, from which might have been anticipated a release from his unrelenting injustice, sealed my doom. Strange fatality!—the destruction of my enemy had not emancipated me from his blasting power: the gulf which had just received him, groaned insatiable for another victim; the tomb refused to close without a human Holocaust!

The ill-usage which I had endured from the deceased,—the very circumstance of discovering his villany through Richardson's letter, my own misfortunes, the opprobrium he had ever heaped upon me, would be additional evidence; for the greater the injury sustained, the greater the probability of persecution having elicited revenge.

Recollection was busy with the past, when I perceived that night had advanced rapidly on the wings of darkness, and a violent rush in the

passage proclaimed an arrival. The bolts which secured my cell were slowly withdrawn: a key was applied, and the heavy iron-studded door wheeled back on its creaking hinges . . . Ranger bounded at my feet, and Emily sank fainting in my arms.

It would be vain, or rather impossible, to describe the fond, the generous outpourings of her heart. She came to share my destiny,—to abide by me,—to pledge her faith in the sight of God. Illness alone had hitherto detained her from me. Cleveland, with kind deception, had concealed her situation from my solicitous inquiries; and when I beheld her pale, attenuated form, I could scarcely believe the ravage which a few short days of anguish had wrought.

“To see you thus, Harcourt!” sobbed the weeping girl, “is more than I can endure.—I thought I was prepared for the blow, but I feel sinking under it.”

“Emily! dearest,” cried I, “this agitation can be of no avail. Why did you expose your

health, already impaired?—Oh, God! . . . why did you venture? . . . Emily! . . . return to Mrs. Cleveland at once; I will see you after . . . but not now,—the sight of you unmans me, and makes me tremble at the danger which menaces both!”

“Charles,” replied Emily, “I must save you,—can my newly inherited wealth be of service? It is yours. Money may still be of some use; dispose of it all!—but, Charles, I can never outlive the horror of to-morrow!—When Cleveland came to us this evening, his pallid countenance, and care-worn brow, proclaimed but too plainly the misery before us. I was slumbering and dreaming of other days when he arrived from Mr. Ashton’s apartments. I could not extract a satisfactory answer to my interrogatories, and suspected . . . the truth! . . . Charles, your trial comes on to-morrow!”

“What of that, love?—Innocence will suffice; there is a guiding Providence which can free me from this foul imputation. I place my trust in Heaven! . . . Should it be ordained



otherwise, and if I am called upon to resign myself to the Divine will,—if a doom of which I dare not think is now awaiting me, I must prepare to meet it with firmness and fitting submission. Remember, dearest, that I shall not be the first victim of an unjust sentence. We have a high example of long and patient suffering,—of protracted agony, and unrepining meekness. Emily, when He died, that *we* might *live*, shall *I* murmur at the bitter cup, and rise in rebellion against the all-wise decree that requires a worthless existence at my hands? ”

“ Charles ! ” shrieked Emily, “ you shall not, — you must not die ! — What is life to me without you ? I long have loved you : constancy claims its reward. Cleveland will assist us. Harcourt : you must make your escape ! — All we possess shall be gladly sacrificed. — Gold can do much. These walls may yet relinquish their prey. Charles, you shall live, — live to love me ! we will seek some distant shore, where none can inquire our eventful history. ”

I smiled involuntarily at this fond enthusiasm, and replied in heartfelt gratitude. "No, no, dearest! keep your gold for a better purpose. Gold cannot blot out the stain of accusation. I must be acquitted, or die! No, Emily; I shrink not from the contemplation of a fate that loses half its terrors in the consciousness of its being unmerited. Sad as it is to relinquish the blessings of existence, I prefer the scaffold to the wretched alternative of escape and concomitant shame. By the laws of my country I must abide; by their fiat I will stand or fall; the Power who directs the blow will strengthen me under its infliction. I cannot accept the noble, generous offer you have made. Your sentiments on this occasion are such as a fond devoted woman might be expected to feel towards a wretched outcast, whom she has honoured with her regard and pity; but you, dearest, must not be involved in the ruin that threatens to overwhelm me. You are young, beloved, and possess the elements of felicity within your reach. Time, that great obliterator of all

things, will gradually sweep away the remembrance of the unfortunate Harcourt! You will think of me through the medium of years with a chastened sentiment of regret and friendship; but it is not meet you should share the disgrace of my position. Dispose of your riches in acts of kindness; let the Countess of Glenmore diffuse charity and peaceful plenty around;—reap the glowing harvest of gratitude; but Heaven forbid that I should crush you with the weight of my miseries. Emily, leave me to that Being from whom no secrets are hid, and to whom all hearts are open.” —I clasped the shuddering girl in my arms; we mingled our tears, and as I pressed her slight form to my breast, I felt that I was yet happy, compared to what I should be on the morrow.

She hovered near like a blessing from the indigent: it was all that was left to me. I lingered on the present fleeting moment, which swiftly glided by.

“Charles,” she resumed, “I came to act, not to weep. Edmund will arrange all preparations

for our flight. A vessel sails for America from Bristol next week. The captain has already consented to secret *you* on board, and *my* movements are free; a suitable disguise is in preparation; bribes have already been distributed."

"Emily," answered I, gravely, "is this the purity of your attachment? Would you rather see me live under an accusation of heinous guilt than allow me to face the world in conscious innocence?"

"Charles! spare me," murmured the countess. "I could die for you; but I cannot calmly relinquish you to the terrific consequences of a trial, without an effort to save you if I could; but," added she, with a love-inspiring smile, "our preliminaries are not concluded."—She produced a plain gold ring, and placing it in my hand, knelt down reverently, exclaiming with fervour, "Before God,—in the presence of an all-seeing Deity, I bind myself to thee, I share thy destiny, whatever it may be! Charles, beloved Charles! repeat the words after me.—"

In this foreboding hour of adversity, I pledge my faith to thine, now and for ever!" added she, with solemnity.

I bent humbly by her side, watching her pure lips as they moved in earnest prayer. There was hope, fond, confiding hope in her faltering accents.

We exchanged a lingering embrace; and I severed one beautiful, dark, glossy braid from her noble head, and secreted it in my bosom; it was a bridal token,—the sole treasure I possessed. For some moments we indulged the bitter satisfaction of being together,—of reiterating our vows, and mutually supporting each other.

Emily had too much native dignity and fortitude not to appreciate the feelings which induced me to oppose every overture at escape that her tenderness and attachment had suggested; and although deeply grieved at my unshaken determination, she was also too high-minded not to admit that, by eluding the course of justice, I should thereby give a tacit acknow-

ledgment of the justice of the accusations brought against me, and display a weakness of purpose, a meanness of soul, and a deficiency of moral courage equally unworthy a man, a philosopher, and a Christian.

The simple truths with which I sought to combat her entreaties, succeeded in convincing her of the uselessness of argument. With many tears she admitted the force of my observations, and had in a slight degree recovered from her excessive agitation, ere the chaplain of the prison entered. His presence had been expected by me during the evening, and I remembered that a more imperious duty was yet to be discharged, when he requested Emily would abridge her visit.

“Mrs. Cleveland’s carriage is waiting to convey your ladyship home,” said he, addressing Emily; “allow me to conduct you. In a few moments, Mr. Harcourt, I shall return to our more serious duties.”

My sweet friend hung in speechless agony on my neck.

“To morrow-night I will come again,” murmured the afflicted countess,—“and the next night too . . . and again, . . . and again, until . . . Sir, you are a clergyman, a minister of Christ,—give me hope, give me consolation, lest I sink under this severe dispensation !”

“To-morrow, madam, I will call on you,” returned Mr. Beverley; “but now, we must proceed to the preparation incumbent on every christian . . . Mrs. Cleveland is anxious for your return. The night-air is prejudicial, and your present state of mental excitement renders this scene highly injurious to your health. Your friend is, herself, waiting in the carriage; motives of delicacy and consideration prevented her joining you. She insists, however, on your returning immediately with her.”

The reverend gentleman ceased, and using much friendly persuasion, at length supported the trembling steps of my Emily to the carriage, in which the kind and devoted Mrs. Cleveland had patiently waited.

The night passed in prayer, meditation, seri-

ous converse, and strict self-examination. I found my spiritual comforter, Mr. Beverley, a truly worthy man, imbued with pity, meekness, zeal, and unostentatious learning. I did not attempt to conceal any of my faults and errors from the healing balm of conscientious scrutiny. He appeared considerably interested in my fate, especially, being apprised of the tender attachment and important engagement subsisting between myself and the youthful countess. He melted in pity at the miserable prospects awaiting us ; he thought it right to undeceive me as to any hopes being entertained of my acquittal. However sanguine my friends might be, the circumstantial evidence was too strong to be broken down either by eloquence or ingenuity ; and the chaplain assured me, that the general opinion was extremely unfavourable ; although my case excited feelings of considerable interest, blended with commiseration, scarcely a doubt remained of a capital conviction.

Thus prepared for the worst, it was my



solemn duty to nerve myself to meet the investigation of man, and to purify my heart to receive the ordinances of religion; and notwithstanding the awful crisis before me, I could not help imploring the aid and consolation of this excellent man, in favour of the sorely stricken Emily, who would require the support of Heavenly assistance, under the affliction she was likely to endure.

Mr. Beverley, with that indulgence which most frequently accompanies humble merit, faithfully promised to visit and soothe the agitated girl,—to uphold her drooping spirits in time of need, and divert her thoughts from the sad contemplation of coming evil.

The grey twilight of morning began to streak the horizon, when the chaplain took his leave. Restored to my equanimity by the pious exercises of the last few hours, I retired to rest with the tranquillity of resignation, and slept profoundly until I was aroused from my slumbers by the entrance of the jailor.

I awoke, greatly refreshed, and proceeded to

the minute details of my toilet with a composure it is not easy to explain. What a strange, unaccountable sentiment is that which prompts a man, on the very verge of eternity, to occupy the small portion of time allotted, in the care of his external appearance ! Yet so it is . . . My person, never an object of exclusive attention, became for a moment of the utmost importance . . . I seldom prepared for a ball with more assiduity than I did for the impending solemnity of this memorable occasion . . . Negligence might be construed into despair, guilt or remorse . . . And as my hands were pure, I resolved that my garb should be spotless.

I went to the court-house with the unassuming dignity with which it behoves every man to meet a false accusation, and entered the dock with a firm step, gazing calmly on the scene of which I was the principal actor. The court was crowded to excess ; all classes had flocked to see the murderer of Glenmore, and witness the progress of the trial. Murmurs of surprise, conjecture, and anxiety greeted my arrival.

The sun shone forth in glorious brilliancy ; its noonday beams fell on many a familiar face, pale with emotion and contracted with terror.

Amongst others, I recognized the chief evidence, the groom ; his harsh vulgar features preserved their unyielding rigidity : there was a savageness in his glance, which showed that his testimony would not be mitigated by any alleviating observation. Mr. Richardson seemed to labour under considerable agitation ; his own character was involved in the issue of the ensuing investigation. The landlord of the Antelope, the village surgeon, and the reluctant Cleveland completed the group which occupied my principal attention.

Mr. Ashton was placed near me, for the purpose of assisting counsel with additional notes.

The case opened at length for the prosecution, to which I pleaded "not guilty." The groom was first examined. The substance of his testimony proved that he was with the Earl of Glenmore on the evening of October the 9th, 183— ; had lived with his lordship many years

previous to his accession to the title ; Mr. Harcourt and his master had always been on bad terms, having fought at Cambridge ; the dislike was mutual.

(Cross examined by the court.) “ Have you a good reason to know the feeling was reciprocal ? ”

(Groom.) “ I have. About three years ago my lord was much annoyed at a report of Mr. Harcourt paying his addresses to Miss Vyvian, —the present countess in her own right ; and recollect perfectly that my master left town post haste to put a stop to Harcourt’s presumption.”

(Cross examined by counsel.) “ Then you think the prisoner had reason to complain of your master, and that he was the aggrieved party ? ”

(Groom.) “ I do not know whether he was or was not : he had offended my master, some how or other ; *that* was certain.”

(By counsel.) “ This tends to prove Mr. Harcourt an injured man.”

(By the court.) “ The particulars of Lord Glenmore’s private quarrels are not required ;

proceed with your evidence as to the day of the murder."

(Groom.) "On the —— day of October, his lordship mounted his horse at Desmond Hall, in order to visit Mr. Richardson; the horse had been ordered the night before; I took it to be shod on that account."

(By the court.) "You mentioned your master's intention of riding whilst waiting at the blacksmith's?"

(Groom.) "I did; there were many people loitering about the place; Mr. Harcourt's boy was there, I think, but cannot swear to that: on my bringing the horse for his lordship to mount, he called out to the butler, 'I shall be here in the evening, in time for dinner.' I fancied there was a rustling in the shrubbery, but believed it to be the dogs; we went to Mr. Richardson's; remained there all day; some very particular business was to be settled; a little before seven I brought round the horse; my master rode on pretty smart; I stopped for a moment to pick up my hat, which was knocked

off by a branch that overshadowed Mr. Richardson's lane; I endeavoured to brush the dirt from it; during that time my lord was quite out of sight, and had reached the cross roads; I heard a shot fired in that direction, and tried to spur on, but the mare was restive, and plunged repeatedly, which detained me some minutes; on reaching the spot I saw a man leave the side of the road in great haste; I was afraid to shout after him on account of the smugglers; I discovered the body of my master on the bank, examined it by the moonlight, and found him quite dead. I was much frightened, but seeing the prisoner leap over the stile, it seemed as if something was wrong; he never looked behind him, but dashed down what we call the smuggler's path, which leads to the cove where Mr. Cleveland had detected the cargo."

(By the counsel.) "Does it not communicate with the fields at the back of the stable-yard belonging to the Antelope?"

(Groom.) "I believe it branches off in many

other directions also ; I cannot say we ever liked to go that side."

(By counsel.) "Was it unfrequented?"

(Groom.) "Lately it got into bad repute ; queer fellows were seen about that way ; which made me follow the prisoner, thinking it was a smuggler who had killed my master ; I know he had a threatening letter from some of the gang the week before, and he was uneasy, and issued two or three warrants to apprehend some of the set ; I did not know the prisoner at the moment I collared him ; he seemed shy of coming on, and said, his ankle was sprained ; it might have been so for all I know."

(By the counsel.) "Was the prisoner concealed purposely, or had he got entangled among the branches, and fallen by accident ? — was it quite dark ?"

(Groom.) "It was quite *dusk*, but the moon had risen ; only now and then a cloud came over, which made things puzzling ; prisoner ran so fast I thought he was trying to escape

from me; I lost sight of him twice; and then I thought he was hiding; but on seeing it was Mr. Charles Harcourt, I did not like to let go, fancying that he might have had his old spite out."

(Counsel.) "Could the prisoner have fallen in the place you describe?"

(Groom.) "May be so; the path was choaked up with big stones, briars and long grass; but Mr. Harcourt was so silent, and did not seem to account for himself to my satisfaction; he was almost stupid; so I searched him, and found a letter directed to my master thrust into his bosom; it was stained with blood."

(By the Court.) "Do you swear that letter now before you, is directed to your late master?"

(Groom.) "I do:—Augustus Percival was Lord Glenmore's name."

(Counsel for the prisoner.) "Would it not be advisable to identify the handwriting?"

Mr. Richardson turned deadly pale as I fixed a look of inquiry on him.



(Groom.) "It looks like Mr. Richardson's writing, but cannot swear."

(Prisoner's counsel.) "Is that your handwriting, Mr. Richardson?"

"It is."

"Are not the contents of that letter of importance to Mr. Harcourt?—Could he have any motive in getting possession of that paper?"

Richardson was confounded; but with infinite presence of mind, he declined answering any questions irrelevant to the trial, or that might tend to criminate himself.

The gun was next produced and identified by all:—it was mine; the shot and wadding extracted from the wound corresponded precisely with the charge remaining in the second barrel; the paper had been torn in two pieces, and joined exactly; it was covered with calculations in my writing; the surgeon proved death to have been occasioned by the wound inflicted with the fatal weapon, which had been discovered in a deep ditch behind the hedge,

not far from the spot where I had stumbled amongst the brambles.

The groom was re-examined, and asked if he had observed that the prisoner carried a gun on leaving the deceased, but he could not answer, the distance being too great; he only distinguished a person moving swiftly away. But on finding the prisoner, witness had not observed that he carried fire-arms.

Mr. Richardson was re-examined: he acknowledged that Mr. Harcourt had been to his house some time previous to the murder; it was on business; the deceased had always entertained an unfavourable opinion of the prisoner, who was a natural son of his predecessor, by Maria, wife of Sir John Neville. Lord Glenmore left witness's house about seven o'clock on the evening of the murder.

The landlord of the inn was next put on oath. He was greatly agitated, and evinced much feeling; the tears stood in his eyes, and the once rubicund face, was blanched with conflicting emotion:—with tremulous voice he answered:

“I have known Mr. Charles Harcourt, man and boy; he was ever a kind, generous, noble-hearted fellow; he slept at the Antelope when his father died; and though he was left without a shilling in the wide world he behaved like a king, and took his poor sick brother along with him to London.”

(By the Court.) “Was the prisoner at your house on the night of the murder?”

(Landlord.) “He was; he came in with a gun on his shoulder; the same gun that has been proved in court; called for a sandwich and some double XX; I do not know if the gun was loaded; Mr. Harcourt left about seven o’clock.”—Here the witness endeavoured to close his evidence, but was asked if any other people had frequented the Antelope on that day.

“Yes, many,” said the publican.

(By the Court.) “All strangers to you?”

(Landlord.) “Not exactly;—sea-faring chaps that came backwards and forwards with fruit, poultry, and eggs from France.”

(Counsel.) "And other things besides?"—  
The host of the Antelope coloured, but was not compelled to answer.

Cleveland was next brought forward; he was asked the usual questions, to which he replied:

"The prisoner is my nearest and dearest friend; we have known each other from childhood; I once beheld him save the life of the deceased at the peril of his own." He was here interrupted by the court and directed to proceed with the detail of the occurrences of the eventful day.

"Mr. Harcourt left my house early."

(By the Court.) "Did he communicate his plans or ideas to you?"

Cleveland answered, "No!"

(By the Court.) "Were you informed of his visit to Mr. Richardson?"

(Cleveland.) "No!"

(By the Court.) "He did not speak about his hopes of obtaining a share of his father's property?"

"No!"

(By the Court.) "He did not in this instance consult you with his usual candour?"

Cleveland looked mournful, but replied boldly, "His intentions were always so excellent, that I never questioned them."

(By the Court.) "Did the prisoner take that gun with him on leaving Belmont Lodge on the 9th of October 183—?"

(Cleveland.) "He did."

(By the Court.) "Is that the same gun?"

(Cleveland.) "It is." A sudden faintness here overcame the witness, and he was removed. The prosecution had closed, and I was called upon for my defence.

## CHAPTER XIII.

There is no courage but in innocence,  
No constancy, but in an honest cause.

They did not know how hate can burn,  
In hearts once changed from soft to stern.

LORD BYRON, *Siege of Corinth*.

The touch of human sympathy,  
That mournful tenderness, which still  
In grief and joy, in good and ill,  
Lingers with woman thro' life's void,  
Saddened, subdued, but not destroyed.

L. E. L.

“MY Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury,

“Sinking under the heavy accusation of murder, an accusation from which human nature shrinks with instinctive horror, you must forgive the hurried and inefficient manner in which I shall seek to refute so foul a charge.

“The language of innocence is seldom ingenious, and however anxious I may be to exculpate myself from this fearful imputation, yet I have little to argue in contradiction to the facts already elicited against me.

“The Earl of Glenmore has indeed wronged me, as this fatal letter will show, the handwriting of which is sufficiently proved, and its receipt, by Augustus Percival, can be equally traced by the post-mark. I am anxious to attract your attention, my Lord, and gentlemen of the jury, to the letter in question: its contents must shake your confidence in the witness Richardson, and convince the world that he has been guilty of an act which, if not equivalent to felony, approaches very near its limits. This letter was not in my possession when I called on Richardson, nor was I acquainted with its existence; but I had been informed that he was accessory to the suppression of my father's will.

“On the morning of 9th of October 183—, I left Belmont Lodge with the intention of

shooting. I will not detain you, by adverting to an inherent taste for solitary exercise, or expatiate on the motives which induced me to refrain from communicating the business to my dear and valued friend Mr. Cleveland : it might have been an error of judgment,—surely not of intention.

“ I had rambled some miles in the direction of Desmond Hall : need I say that it was a spot linked with the strongest feelings of my nature, and that I avoided the vicinity of my former home by entering a copse-wood belonging to Mr. Cleveland, where I met a woman called Mary Smith, whom I have seen under the protection of the deceased, who subsequently dismissed her. It is not for me to dilate on the failings or vices of the murdered Glenmore : let them rest with him in the grave ! peace to his ashes ! I harmed him not !

“ Mary Smith accosted me, and delivered the letter, which she acknowledged to have abstracted from Augustus Percival, when living with him in London ; that on his cruelly wanton



desertion, she had kept it *in terrorem*, being unwilling to use it except from extreme provocation; and latterly failing in every attempt to extort money or assistance, and the Earl having issued a warrant for her apprehension, she sought to revenge herself by informing me of the existence of my father's will, and gave me the convincing proof contained in this letter. The stain of blood was accidental; it was observed by me on re-folding the paper; the woman was binding her hand, which appeared cut with the briars, and that sufficiently explained the circumstance to me at the time.

“Fatigued with exercise, I entered the Antelope, and called for refreshment. I have known the landlord from boyhood,—he was once in service at the hall,—my gun happened to be loaded,—I placed it carefully in a corner of the room. During the few minutes I was seated, a stranger, evidently disguised, came into the chamber, and immediately joined a party of men who were drinking in the next apartment. I paid my reckoning at the bar, and departed about seven

o'clock. I missed my gun. On approaching the four roads, a noise there issuing from behind the hedge occasioned me to feel some slight alarm; at the moment, Lord Glenmore appeared riding swiftly towards me; he was within two yards of the spot on which I stood. I recognized his lordship in the moonlight, when a shot, fired from the hedge, struck him from his horse. He fell dead at my feet. I raised the body, and placed it on the bank; after which, I hastened for assistance, and certainly proceeded with the utmost precipitation, until I came to a stile which led through a path I remembered often to have traversed when a youth:—it has two or three terminations: one is a short cut, saving about half a mile to the Antelope stables; the other conducts by an intricate wood to the smuggler's cove.—My foot struck against a stone; I fell, and sprained my ankle; the briars had entangled themselves with my clothes, and my hands were severely scratched in endeavouring to extricate myself. The witness who seized me at the time has

detailed the circumstances most accurately, except that he allowed his personal fears and prejudices to paralyze his voice. Had I known he was in the neighbourhood, my steps would naturally have been arrested by the assurance of human aid being at hand.

“As to my unsatisfactory answers, I appeal to you, my lord,—to any gentleman on the jury, what would your feelings, your conduct be under similar circumstances? Horror was pre-eminent!!

“I will not intrude on the court by urging asseverations of innocence which I again reiterate before God and man. I repel the accusation by every sentiment of humanity, and appeal to the justice of that Divine Legislator at whose high tribunal we all must bend in contrite humility. The laws of man are unfavourable to me. He alone can stretch forth the arm of salvation. So help me God I am innocent!!”

A murmur of disappointment ran through the assembly as I concluded. Much had been expected; all had anticipated a most brilliant

and effective defence. The voice of truth fell coldly on the ear.

I had elicited no new facts, and had not even attempted to throw a different light on the evidence against me, which remained unshaken. Those who had heard of my literary success had hoped for a splendid specimen of oratorical talent and legal acuteness. Cleveland cast a look of agonized suspense, and rushed from the witness box, as the judge commenced summing up the evidence.

He requested the jury would discard from their minds all collateral facts. The prisoner had evidently cause of complaint against the deceased, and there could be no doubt of his harbouring sinister feelings calculated to produce serious results. The accused left Belmont Lodge early on the day of the murder. It remained with the jury to decide if it was with the intention of watching the motions of the deceased, as the testimony of the groom seemed to imply. He had lingered at the Antelope until dusk, and quitted the inn

just as Lord Glenmore might be expected to have reached the cross roads. Every testimony corroborated the fact of Harcourt's being on the spot when the murder was committed, and was discovered concealed in an unfrequented path. When searched, a letter tinged with blood was found in his bosom. This circumstance was peculiarly suspicious. The letter contained information likely to benefit the prisoner in a pecuniary sense. There was no evidence beyond his own assertion to prove that this letter had been given by Mary Smith. Nor was there any witness produced to identify the existence of the person so named.

“The gun which had been found in the ditch was brought forward, and sworn to by all parties as property belonging to the accused individual. The charge extracted from the wound proved beyond a doubt that the fatal shot had been fired from that weapon; *that* fact was clearly substantiated. The foot-prints tallied, and the whole chain of evidence was completely borne out as to the prisoner's being on

the spot at the period of the murder. He had not even attempted to show an *alibi*. The testimony of Mr. Cleveland, though favourable, from that very circumstance was less calculated to clear up any of the preceding facts. It remained with the jury to decide if Charles Harcourt had fired the shot which caused the death of Lord Glenmore. In such a case the verdict would involve capital punishment. There were no extenuating circumstances that could for one moment authorise a more lenient conclusion, and it was left for the jury to deliberate if any part of the evidence could be construed into an acquittal."

The judge ceased. A breathless, awful silence prevailed,—a sort of convulsive sob of pent-up emotion burst from the eager crowd as the jury rose with grave countenances to retire.

Mr. Ashton and my counsel exchanged looks that could not be misinterpreted. My doom was no longer doubtful, and it was easily perceived that considerable excitement reigned amongst the members of the bar.

At this critical moment a slip of paper was handed from below to the leading barrister. It seemed dirty and crushed, evidently written in pencil, but I recognized the writing even at a distance. Impending danger seems to gift us with additional perception : the senior counsel prayed the court for permission to proceed with the examination of another witness on behalf of the prisoner, the evidence of whom was likely to prove of the highest importance. The constables were at that moment engaged bringing up the person in question, who would certainly appear in the course of a few minutes.

My heart nearly ceased to palpitate as I leant for support against the dock, and my aching sight, fatigued with exertion, wandered in anxious expectancy towards the witness's door.

The crisis was at hand ; I could not doubt it on beholding Cleveland in the crowd below, making his way through the dense group of individuals who filled the arena. His expressive countenance beamed with intelligent animation.

He raised his arm, and made a signal not to be mistaken: it was indeed a welcome token of mercy and salvation. Considerable agitation was perceptible; the multitude waving backwards and forwards recoiled one on another. The hydra-headed mass moved with one impetus, and divided, while a fresh mob poured in from without, as a body of constables escorted Mary Smith into court!

She was placed in the witness box, — a spontaneous burst of joy and surprise hailed her appearance, which was far from prepossessing. She was altered beyond belief: every vestige of beauty was lost; she looked wretchedly thin and care-worn; her eyes, red and fiery, cast bewildered glances on surrounding objects. Her hectic cheek, no longer bright with excitement or surreptitious bloom, was sunk and hollow, of a ghastly paleness; and her loose black hair, once remarkable for its shining silkiness, hung in rough and matted locks from under an old straw bonnet, crushed and weather-stained. Her long meagre arms protruded from the



scanty folds of a grey cloak; the threadbare texture of which bespoke a tale of poverty and privation. Her features seemed sharpened by want and misery, and their expression was of horrible import.

She was sworn, and deposed that she was a native of D——, in Cambridgeshire; her age twenty-seven.—A murmur of mingled doubt and astonishment intercepted her voice: indeed the haggard form before us conveyed an idea of protracted suffering;—all roundness and freshness, all the charm of youth had fled; the fierce contention of human passion had scathed her; the lustre of her eyes was quenched in tears, which were shed profusely on seeing me.

She was evidently much alarmed, and spoke with hurried accents, and vehement gesticulations.

“Release Harcourt!” she exclaimed, peremptorily. “He is guiltless!” Loud and repeated acclamations interrupted her. Some moments elapsed ere the disturbance occasioned by her protestations was quelled. Had it continued, the court must have been cleared.

"You can prove nothing against him!" added the woman wildly. "He is innocent!"

"When did you last see the prisoner?" inquired the counsel.

"On the day of the murder," answered she sullenly.

"At what hour?" continued the barrister.

"I know not: the sun was low in the west, but I took no heed of time . . . but I tell you, Harcourt is falsely accused,—that is enough."

"You were the person who gave the prisoner that letter?"

"I was;—meaning to serve him,—meaning to fulfil an act of justice; and that fatal letter betrayed him even unto death."

(By the Court.) "You kept that document many years?"

"Too long, indeed; but it is in his possession now. He can claim his own," replied the woman, with a deep drawn sigh.

(Counsel.) "Where did you meet the prisoner on the 9th day of October, 183—?"

"In a wood belonging to Mr. Cleveland."

(Counsel.) "Was he armed?"

"He was,—but that gun was not discharged by his hand," cried she, in a sepulchral voice.

(Counsel.) "That is, you did not see the shot fired."

"Oh, my lord!" screamed Mary Smith, with a tone of terror appealing to the judge, as it were for credence, "let not Charles Harcourt suffer condemnation! I swear before God,—before the universe,—he is innocent!!"

She was interrupted by the counsel inquiring how long and when she had first known the accused.

"You ask an idle question," returned she; "but if my testimony is required to save Charles Harcourt's life, I am ready to answer all,—to detail the events of years past, to rake up the embers of recollection. I first saw Harcourt at D—— church, near Cambridge. He was then a student at the university."

(Counsel.) "Was it at the time he had a duel with the deceased?—perhaps you were the cause of it?"

The witness faltered.—“ Perhaps I was, or was not,” replied she ; “ that is immaterial. Mr. Harcourt was deservedly loved, and esteemed by all.”

(Counsel.) “ Was that the origin of the enmity which appears to have existed between the deceased and the accused ? ”

“ No, no,” exclaimed the woman ; “ that enmity had long festered in the cankered breast of Augustus Percival. School emulation ; jealousy resulting from various causes ; the circumstances attending Mr. Harcourt’s birth, were a source of constant taunting insult from the more fortunate heir.”

The counsel for the prisoner interrupted the witness, by inquiring if she was acquainted with the contents of the letter. A flash of intelligence brightened her countenance. Richardson sank back on his seat. “ I have told Harcourt the particulars,” returned she. “ You want no more of me.”

“ Stay, woman ! ” observed the judge sternly. “ These disjointed sentences are not sufficient

to exculpate the prisoner: did you meet a man disguised with green spectacles and thick moustachios, on the 9th October, 183—?”

“ I did,” answered Mary, looking confused. The landlord of the inn exchanged glances most significantly with the witness, which occurrence did not escape the notice of the court. They were asked if this was the first time of their seeing each other. It was not, for many people identified Mary Smith as being in the habit of frequenting the Antelope, either by herself, or in the company of strange individuals. Yet her ostensible calling, her home, and present habitation were alike unknown.

“ Do you want to know my home?” cried the woman wildly.—“ Do you want to pry into the haunts of wretchedness I have frequented? or do you wish to know the refuge of guilty penury, seeking to escape the persecution of man. I avoided the sheltering roof, the blazing hearth, the hospitable board; I found solitude in the green lanes and woody glens by

day, and a hay-rick protected my weary limbs by night. I had nothing to sustain my burdensome existence beyond the scanty morsel I either begged or purloined from others. Hunger and thirst were my companions, and lassitude contended with remorse. I have wandered in the neighbourhood now for many days. I have lingered near the blood-stained spot. I haunted the scene where revenge triumphed over wealth, power, and oppression. I crossed no threshold, I entered no habitation, I craved no succour . . . . . mankind was leagued against me. I could claim no protection from the wide arm of the law, which was extended to crush me . . . but I fear it not . . . . I know the man who released Lord Glenmore's perjured soul from the trammels of life." . . . Mary laughed like a maniac on uttering these words,—a thrill of horror pervaded the assembly. . . . "The aim was unerring," added she with levity, which filled her hearers with disgust. "He is safe now beyond judge or jury. You cannot harm him. Release Harcourt, I say, for he is not the

murderer. But if ye remember one whom Augustus robbed, corrupted, injured, and dishonoured . . .”

“Woman,” interrupted the judge, “this language is incomprehensible. Your evidence is useless to the prisoner. You must speak in plainer terms. Was the man in green spectacles accessory to the murder?”

“I will not answer,” retorted the woman; “but I tell you he is far from hence, and you cannot touch him.”

“You must be committed as an accomplice, or appear as King’s evidence,” observed the judge.

“King’s evidence!” screamed Mary, hiding her face with her hands. “King’s evidence against *him*! Never; I am his accomplice; commit me if you will. I was the principal plotter and instigator—the very contriver of Glenmore’s destruction. I urged him to the deed. I roused him to vengeance.—But you have not liberated Harcourt. I tell you that the measure of crime is completed; add not more to the cup of bitterness; spare the guilt-

less. He who fired the fatal shot is far from hence: no warrant can find him; no myrmidon of office can molest him. The salt sea rolls its foaming waves between us . . . he may lie buried in the deep waters, for the wind has howled and the raging storm has pelted around me; in the darkness of night I fancied I heard a death-shriek issue from the caverned depths of the ocean . . . I should have followed him, shared his destiny, and participated in his peril; but *he* forbade me. Danger menaced the innocent! Harcourt was implicated! We could not see him perish . . .”

She was here interrupted by the counsel,—  
“ And why did you delay giving your testimony or appearing in his favour? ”

“ I feared to speak, unwilling to expose others, until sufficient time had elapsed to ensure their safe retreat. This day I was lurking in the outskirts of the city, collecting floating reports concerning the progress of the trial; and hearing that Harcourt’s life was in jeopardy, I thought it was time to show myself. Besides,



the placards offering rewards were renewed; the sum promised for the apprehension of Mary Smith was doubled . . . The case was urgent . . . I wanted no recompense. I came forward voluntarily to speak the truth . . .”

Before she closed her narrative, tremendous shouts and deafening clamours resounded from without. The awful tumult increased to such a pitch, that the business of the day was suspended. An immense mob was rapidly collecting outside, and rent the air with their vociferous acclamations. Frequent and appalling imprecations, mingled with cries of triumph, murmurs of impatience, and all the terrific uproar of popular commotion, were re-echoed by a thousand voices. “He is innocent—save him!” —“the smuggler is taken!” was rapidly repeated from mouth to mouth, by the assembled multitude. Panic-struck, the unfortunate Mary uttered a piercing yell, as the constables, assisted by main force, dragged in a man whose attire was similar to that of the stranger I had met in the parlour of the inn on the night of the

murder. A fearful group completed the picture. Four ruffians, pinioned two and two, brought up the rear, whose desperate resistance was shown in their fettered limbs and bleeding wounds: the outrageous populace, that with difficulty was prevented from forcing an entrance to the court-house, had torn the disguises which had been assumed by the strangers. The prominent figure of *one*, however, absorbed general attention: he was bare-headed. A ghastly sabre-cut on his forehead proclaimed that a deadly conflict had occurred. One eye was concealed by a bandage, saturated with gore; his right arm was nearly dislocated by the twisted rope that bound it behind him: horror was depicted in his distorted countenance; but in the blood-stained wretch who appeared, like Cain before us, I recognized—Lord St. Elme.

# CHAPTER XIV.

For time, at last, sets all things even ;  
And if we do but watch the hour,  
There never yet was human power  
Which could evade, if unforgiven,  
The patient search, the vigil long,  
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

Lord Byron, *Manfred*.

To what gulfs  
A single deviation from the track  
Of human duties leads !

Lord Byron, *Sardanapalus*.

Mourir . . . c'est un instant de supplice ;  
Mais . . . vivre!!!

FRÉDÉRIC SOULIÉ.

My instantaneous and honourable acquittal was the immediate result of Lord St. Elme's capture. A long and painfully interesting trial ensued, which called forth feelings of intense

anxiety. I watched its progress, with great assiduity, and in the course of a complicated and soul-harrowing investigation, the following important circumstances were elicited from Mary Smith and her unfortunate accomplice.

When living under the protection of Augustus Percival, the former had in some degree been initiated in his secret sentiments and opinions. During moments of unguarded confidence on his part, she had collected sufficient information, with respect to his gambling transactions, and vile conduct towards St. Elme, to feel convinced that the viscount, was alike his dupe and his victim. She also discovered his persecuting enmity towards myself, which created a strong interest in her mind, blended with considerable curiosity, and rendered me an object of conjectural importance in her estimation. At the period of my father's last, fatal illness, the correspondence between Mr. Richardson and the lawful heir, became frequent and voluminous: this excited latent suspicion; and from some imprudent expressions, which Augustus

had used in her presence, she drew a conclusion which was unfavourable to them both. With that cunning and artful dexterity so usual amongst the degraded class of females to which she belonged, Mary soon acquired conviction of the fact hitherto conjectured; she watched a propitious opportunity, and seized the letter which criminated Richardson; for Augustus, in the hurry of starting for Desmond Hall, had unguardedly mislaid the paper, which she had secured, and concealed so effectually, that he concluded he had destroyed every existing proof of his delinquency, by consigning the contents of his writing desk to the flames.

On taking possession as heir, Augustus revelled in the glories of a newly acquired title. Luxuriating in the acquisition of the Glenmore property, and its attendant advantages, he felt reluctant to limit the noble sphere of sensual gratification open to him. Satiated with Mary, he panted for change; his victim had ceased to please or amuse, and on his returning to London, he joyfully seized the first plausible excuse

to cast her off, with the heartless levity of a practised libertine. She left him without regret, the creature he had made her.

For awhile she loitered about London, spending the remnant of her ill-acquired pelf, and seeking those excitements to which her vitiated mind was now accustomed. This continued a few weeks, until the approaches of poverty, and a lingering spark of feminine virtue, induced her to wander back to her native village. A tale of death greeted her arrival; her ingratitude, her misconduct, was a rich theme for rustic animadversion. The stubborn facts of her guilt, and its consequences, were related in stern simplicity. No consolation, no palliation was offered. She found the path of virtue closed by self-abasement; the home she sought was no longer open to receive the frail and fallen Mary;—she was sent forth with harsh and cutting ignominy. Poor and friendless, without character, and without support, she could find no means of earning an honest livelihood. The career of vice is also that of idle-

ness and luxury : those who once have partaken the wages of sin, and the lavish profusion of profligacy, are no longer capable of discharging the active duties, and of exercising the virtuous energy required from industrious poverty.

Alarmed at the prospect of pinching distress which menaced her, she applied to Glenmore for assistance : it was denied. She implored,—she exhorted,—her child was dying ; he refused her. She had sued in vain on her bended knees, and bethinking herself of the valuable secret of which she had so artfully possessed herself, without informing him of the extent of her knowledge, she held out threats sufficiently strong to produce a small remittance, which was reluctantly forwarded by Augustus, accompanied by a careful but deprecatory letter, which was calculated to prevent farther attempts on her part. The earl was ignorant of the document she held. The sum he had allowed her was sufficient to bury the infant, which had expired in her arms.

She again sought solace and oblivion in the

indulgence of spirituous liquors, and the lowest species of debauchery. She became a notorious character on the town. It was in some degraded haunt of vice,—such as are only too often frequented by dissipated men of fashion,—that she met Lord St. Elme. She still preserved enough of her former beauty to excite his depraved taste. She shared in his licentiousness, and encouraged his increasing dereliction from Anastasia. Her influence increased to such a degree over his weak and ill-directed passions, that it was only equalled by the infatuation of gambling and of inebriety. His affairs became daily more and more involved; he was implicated in the forgery of a bill of exchange purporting to be payable by Lord Glenmore, and was compelled to abscond in consequence of the personal danger he apprehended from legal prosecution.

St. Elme went to Paris; thither he was accompanied by the wretched Smith, who clung to the wreck of his drifting fortunes. When I saw them in the French metropolis, they were



living on the joint produce of lottery tickets, and the gaming-table, mutually exciting each other to the immoderate use of stimulants, and the practice of every species of speculative fraud and vicious excess. United as they were by iniquity, there were yet moments when the viscount's better nature appeared to predominate, and a latent spark of gentlemanly feeling lingered in his breast. Polluted as he was with guilty indulgence, St. Elme was yet alive to a sense of degradation ; and the miserable pair would, on these occasions, taunt each other with the wretchedness they were heaping on themselves.

The report of Anastasia's elopement roused the faithless husband to manly resentment, and an acute perception of injury. Mary was rather calculated to foster than repress the natural indignation excited by Glenmore's treachery, and never lost an opportunity of feeding his hatred with additional causes, awakening his sensibilities to the purposes of revenge.

About the time I left Paris, a constant run of

ill-luck brought St. Elme's finances to the lowest ebb. Ruin, beggary, imprisonment stared him in the face; he was reduced to a state of desperation. Creditors would not relax one item of their demands, and Mary would not relinquish the smallest portion of her female privileges. Almost placed between the alternatives of a jail or the high road, St. Elme was induced by her to league himself with a set of ruffians, who, with considerable dexterity, carried on the contraband trade with England, France, Spain, Belgium, and the Rheinal provinces, to an amazing extent. His lordship, under an assumed name, was capable of becoming a useful agent, speaking, as he did, several languages fluently, and possessing a reckless courage, with that total disregard of danger so essential to success in hazardous enterprises, and so likely to be promoted and supported by the use of ardent spirits.

The speculations which had already proved favourable were carried on with vigorous intrepidity. A communication which had been pre-

viously established, was extended along the south-western coast of England. Several publicans became receiving agents for these daring adventurers; through their instrumentality many valuable cargoes of silks, blonds, jewellery, wines, and *liqueurs* were safely landed, and speedily disposed of. On these occasions Mary Smith became an active and intelligent emissary. She had entered into a negotiation with the landlord of the Antelope, where she succeeded in forming a point of rendezvous, and a general emporium. The unfortunate publican had thus completely involved himself with these desperadoes, beyond the power of retreat.

Emboldened by impunity, St. Elme again ventured on English ground. Favoured by disguise, and tempted by circumstances, he visited London. On one of these occasions, (allured by his ruling passion,) in the intervals of cruizing he presumed to appear at Newmarket, where he fortunately escaped recognition; but Augustus was on the race-course.

St. Elme, galled at his loathed aspect, and yielding to his impetuosity, discovered himself to the earl, whom he challenged. A reply of cutting irony, and cruel contempt, was the result: "Do you wish I should consign you to the police?" observed Glenmore, with a sneer; "and prosecute you for forgery to boot."

The dishonoured husband fled from the spot, with the deep fixed purpose of revenge, which deadly sentiment was warmly cherished, and eventually matured by the combinations of the woman, Smith, who had recommenced her importunities for pecuniary aid, which Augustus refused. She again renewed her applications, supported by threats of producing Richardson's letter, denouncing fearful imprecations, to which the earl merely replied by issuing a warrant for her committal under the vagrant act.

Mary, exasperated by this retaliation, worked on the feelings (already sufficiently lacerated) of her wretched companion. The deed of blood

was planned between them, and agreed upon ; its horrible completion was deferred only until a favourable opportunity should present itself.

Mary assiduously collected the necessary information as to the earl's movements ; she had heard the conversation at the blacksmith's, which announced his intended destination on the following day. She lurked in the demesne on the fatal morning until she ascertained the hour of his expected return from Mr. Richardson's. St. Elme had apparently displayed considerable irresolution, and wandered about with his characteristic weakness, until Mary urged and taunted him to the work of vengeance. He hurried to the inn, from whence he intended to obtain fire-arms under some pretext ; and on entering the apartment where I was seated, he retreated from the presence of a stranger without recognising me. Through the increasing gloom of evening, he had detected the shining tube of my gun, as a transient beam from the rising moon had betrayed it : he took advantage of my heedlessness to secure the

weapon during my absence at the bar, and skulking through the back door, followed the narrow path which branched off in the direction of the smuggler's cove, and led by a less intricate communication to the four roads, which Glenmore would unavoidably be obliged to pass in his way home.

Screened from observation by the high fence, the canine sagacity of Ranger had nearly detected him, whilst he remained in the fearful contemplation of the desperate act, which would annihilate his enemy. He waited the critical moment in breathless expectancy, inclining his head towards the earth in order to catch the resounding echoes which reverberated with the tramp of Glenmore's horse, as he approached the fatal spot. The aim was unerring, — and the murderer escaped to the smuggler's cove, where Mary waited the result; and seizing the gun, which she feared would naturally lead to detection, concealed it herself in the ditch.

Deeply interested in the affair, she hung

about the neighbourhood of the Antelope, and discovering that I was arrested in consequence of suspicion being attached to me, a lingering feeling of generosity induced her to remain in the vicinity, awaiting the issue of the trial. St. Elme embarked for France that same night, and promised to send some of his lawless associates to bring her off in safety, whenever circumstances would permit.

The smuggling vessel put to sea at midnight ; the wind rose and became contrary ; the little sloop was buffeted about by adverse weather, and sought shelter with secure anchorage, near the Devonshire coast. This occasioned considerable and very dangerous delay. When the weather cleared, and the smugglers endeavoured to gain the open channel, they were tracked by the revenue officers, who had obtained correct information as to their tactics, and chased them with successful vigilance, bearing down on the contraband sloop, with a tremendous broad side. The combat was sustained with obstinate intrepidity on both sides: the viscount

headed his ruffian companions with decision and courage, making a desperate resistance, which might have been deemed glorious, in a different cause. He was captured, and brought by the naval officers who commanded the cutter to Exeter. Some delay had occurred in landing the prisoners, which prevented the unfortunate St. Elme from being brought forward until the trial was nearly concluded.

He displayed more fortitude than we could possibly expect. As the peril and anguish of his position increased, his mind became more composed, and his conduct was marked with a dignity and self-possession the more surprising as it was not habitual. He pleaded guilty in a firm voice, and never made a single effort to shield himself or save a life that was now worthless. He completely exonerated his wretched companions from all participation in the murder, and throughout the whole investigation endeavoured to redeem some small portion of his past crimes, by a degree of generosity, and moral energy which gave us the



additional pang of knowing that however degraded Lord St. Elme might be, through the indulgence of his vile passions and evil propensities, yet that he was not thoroughly debased or naturally perverted : that want of early example, and religious education were the principal causes of his ruin, which was easily completed when the allurements of dissipation added their seductive influence over a mind unsupported by fixed determination, and integrity of purpose.

In the course of some hours, his wounds, which were very severe, and had been neglected, assumed an angry appearance, which created alarm;—they rapidly inflamed, the patient became feverish, and danger was apprehended.

I visited the unfortunate viscount in prison. Our meeting was truly distressing . . . it cannot be described. From his own lips I received the frightful details of his errors, and a miserable narration of the leading events which had successively marked the progress of his guilty career . . . . it was a tale of startling interest. I witnessed the agony of his dying hour. The

benevolent chaplain administered the consolations of his sacred calling, and produced a visible effect on the mind of my brother-in-law, who lived long enough to evince the most sincere and touching repentance. His wounds mortified. Thus he escaped the penalty of the law recorded against him, and we were spared the anguish of a more awful catastrophe. He expired in the arms of Mr. Beverley, in the presence of Cleveland and myself, whose forgiveness he craved in the name of *that* mercy, to whom we all must apply in the hour of darkness. May his sufferings and sins be alike concluded !

Mary Smith was sentenced to transportation for life, but I learnt since, that she was amongst the convicts who perished at sea during the dreadful gales which prevailed last year. My liberation, attended as it was with the circumstances detailed in the foregoing pages, was not hailed with the expression of any feeling beyond a grateful sense of thankfulness to a merciful and intervening Providence, to whom I

owed my personal preservation, but even these sentiments were mingled with the bitter anguish of lasting regret ;—my safety and honour were purchased with the life of a man who had once been my companion, and the husband of my sister.

His fate was calculated to impress me with a powerful and striking lesson. . . . Weeks, months elapsed, ere I could obliterate the painful recollections with which I was constantly pursued, and it is only within the last twelve months that I have entirely recovered my serenity.

The unwearied attentions of Cleveland, and his charming family, with the devoted attachment and endearing caresses of my own beloved Emily were scarcely sufficient to soothe the agitation of my mind.

My father's will was found by Mr. Richardson, who soon after disposed of his villa, and sailed for America. I did not even threaten to prosecute him, for a more timid, crouching, fawning sycophant, I seldom met with. He

now enjoys a respectable and extensive practice in the United States.

The testamentary document so long suppressed, was legally proved at Doctors' Commons, and administered by the executors of my deceased parent. The sum of 50,000*l.* was duly paid to me by the trustees of Emily, Countess of Glenmore, present possessor of the property, and settled on the younger children proceeding from the marriage solemnized between herself and the legatee.

There yet remained an important duty for us to discharge towards the unhappy Lady St. Elme, who now had a stronger claim upon our pity than ever . . . the once beautiful, accomplished, and fascinating Anastasia was become . . . a harmless idiot . . . her case was beyond the reach of human skill . . . The intelligence of the murder, conveyed incautiously, had completely overthrown the sad remnant of tottering reason . . . at least she was spared the consciousness of passing events, and the horror of knowing the dreadful particulars which had

implicated her brother, and crushed the guilty husband of her youth. My excellent Emily has ministered and inspected her comforts with exemplary kindness, visiting her frequently, and watching her vacant countenance with unparalleled patience, in the remote hope of discovering some faint indication of returning intellect.

But Anastasia is quite lost to every thing except her harp, from which she still extracts tones of surpassing sweetness, and sings disjointed fragments of her favourite airs, until the hearts of all around are breaking. I seldom venture to see her ; the spectacle is too harrowing. On the anniversary of my mother's death, I always pass some portion of the day in the presence of my sister, but except on such occasions, I do not like to witness the total wreck of her who once shone forth in all the glorious pride of mental and bodily perfection. But Emily is indefatigable, and never appears so truly lovely, as when contributing to the health and safety of her melancholy charge.

We always inhabit Desmond Hall,—my father's old faithful butler still attends us. The landlord of the Antelope was sadly implicated in the smuggling transaction, but Cleveland and myself used our united efforts to get him cleared from the imputation resting on his character. Thanks to our influence, he is now quietly re-established in the tap of the Antelope, dispensing his excellent, and truly British home-brewed, without deteriorating from the revenue or encouraging any foreign connections.

The Countess of Glenmore and myself are generally respected by our tenantry, and are considered popular in the neighbourhood. The Clevelands, whose family is apparently on the increase, form almost an integral part of our own circle.

My friends have lately been urging me to offer myself as a candidate to represent one of the divisions of the county in Parliament; but my deliberate judgment forbids me to indulge the vanity of senatorial honours, which would

necessarily detach me from dispensing the powers with which I am endowed, in works of useful employment of charity and of benevolence on my own estate. This duty is the more incumbent upon me, as the manifold blessings I enjoy have just been crowned by the birth of my son, the present Lord Viscount Esdale.

Before I conclude, it may not be ill-timed to remind those who do me the honour to wade through the eventful history of my life, that the slightest deviation from the right path is sure to produce a proportionable degree of misery. That virtue and morality are the only foundations to real happiness; and that there is a guiding Providence, which instinctively directs the righteous mind, and leads, by inscrutable dispensations, to Retributive Justice.

THE END.

## POSTSCRIPT.

I HAD closed the volumes, which occupied the rainy days and solitary evenings of the last three months, with that pleasing sense of self-satisfaction which ever attends the conviction of having completed the object in view to the best of our ability : I was about to send forth my MS. for the amusement of the reading portion of society, without preface, comment, or apology, for the intrusion ;—but I am told that my task could not, with propriety, end with the conclusion of the book ; that an addition is absolutely necessary, which must assume the form of a deprecating address.

I feel the more especially induced to indulge a few observations, as, by a strange coincidence, I find through a paragraph in the “ Morning



Herald" of April 24th, 1834, that a man named William Nailor was executed at Chester, convicted of an attempt to assassinate Mr. Wilkinson, by shooting at him from behind a wall. The evidence was strictly circumstantial, and hinged chiefly on the fact of the foot-prints on the spot from whence the shot was fired, being identified as corresponding with the shoes of the accused person, which bore an unequal number of nails. — William Nailor was condemned, and suffered the penalty of the law, protesting his innocence, with unaffected fervour, until the fatal hour that terminated an existence, sacrificed to the sanguinary recklessness of a penal code, which yet triumphs in its savage uncertainty, over the surrounding approaches of civilized refinement.

One word of self ere we part . . . Gentle reader, the history of Harcourt . . . is a fiction . . . I had almost resolved on keeping my own secret; but I am of a communicative nature, as you, perhaps, may find hereafter . . . "THE BAR-SINISTER," . . . dear reader, . . . is written

by a Lady, her first essay in the arena of literature; . . . it depends on *you* if it be the last. In the pages you have just perused, I have endeavoured to point out the danger, the misery, the remorse, ever attendant on vicious excess; and to show, that the lawless indulgence of illicit passions ever bears its own punishment, and consequent degradation. Many of the scenes have been drawn from "REAL LIFE," — many of the chapters are mere transcripts of events now passing in the bosoms of families, — many of the trifling sketches which I have attempted were taken from the different objects that, at various periods, have unfolded themselves to my observation.

In offering the fruits of my leisure hours to the public, from whom I have all to hope, and all to fear, I feel it difficult to propitiate and interest this powerful and enlightened body, whose attention is now, as it generally is, engrossed by so many works of transcendant merit, that it appears almost presumptuous in "Har-

court" to expect a falling leaf from the crown of popular favour.

Yet such as they are, these volumes have not been written carelessly ; and the cause of virtue, morality, and religion has been the constant standard under which the authoress has ventured to lash at fashionable vices.

Should the pages now submitted to the ordeal of publication meet with an indulgent reception, I shall again have the honour of appearing before the kind patrons of literary exertion, if . . . but I will not anticipate the mortifying possibility of a failure, which would at once impose eternal silence on the AUTHOR.



